PART VI THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

Having studied the relevant passages about the restoration of Israel in the Old Testament, we are quite convinced that those promises are directed at the people of Israel. The prophets talked about the restoration of the nation, the land, and the true religion of Yahweh (esp. the relationship between God and the people), after they had lost their nation and their land. The most critical problem that remains is the question: "Is the New Testament still holding this prospect of hope for the nation Israel?" or "are the promises of the prophets valid for Israel or for the church in the New Testament era?"

Since there is a strong argument that those prophetic promises were given to the church, the so-called new Israel, we will direct our effort towards distinguishing between Israel and the church (or particularity and universality). And we will define who is Israel, and whether or not the terms "Israel" and "the church" are used interchangeably in the New Testament. Because Romans 9-11 most explicitly talks about the restoration of Israel, we will concentrate more on this text. We will also deal with some other passages in the various parts of the Gospels, Acts and the Epistles where the nation of Israel is definitely indicated. Because of lack of space, we will not be able to examine fully most of the passages; rather we will briefly summarise these passages in the scheme of "particularity" and "universality" (ch. 2), and "the usage of Israel" (ch. 3). Then, we will devote our attention to the study of the most important passages of Romans and Galatians for our subject. We must mention that we limit ourselves to the single aspect of "salvation", leaving out the other aspect of "judgment" on Israel. Since our subject is the "restoration of Israel", the passages of Paul's disapproval of the Jews are not going to be fully discussed.

2 PARTICULARITY AND UNIVERSALITY IN THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL

The results of our Old Testament study show that there is a distinctive place for the nation of Israel over against other nations. Sometimes this was brought up in dealing with the salvation of Israel and the judgement of the nations, and sometimes in dealing with the salvation of the nations by their joining in the blessing of Israel. Dealing with our subject, we will first test whether or not the New Testament still distinguishes the nation of Israel from the nations in terms of salvation.

2.1 IN THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

In the Gospels, the missionary work of Jesus is described in terms of searching for the lost sheep among Israel (Mt 10:5f; Lk 19:10). Jesus Himself clarifies his mission in his response to a Gentile woman asking for help, saying: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Mt 15:24). In Matthew's narrative of the birth of Jesus, the angel of the Lord says that "he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21), and in the next paragraph "the people" is clarified in the quotation from Micah 5:2: "You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,... for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people of Israel" (Mt 2:6).

We can best trace the particularity and the universality of salvation from Luke to Acts. In the early part the author, Luke, is aware of and anticipates the tension between the salvation of Israel and that of the Gentiles. In seeing the baby Jesus (Lk 2:29-32) Simeon prophesies by means of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that "Jesus" has a special meaning for both Israel and the Gentiles. On the subject of particularity (the salvation of Israel), Luke starts with Gabriel's announcement that the Child would come to the throne of David and would reign over the house of Jacob forever (Lk 1:32-33). Mary proclaims in her song:

> My soul praises the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior....
> He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham

and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers (Lk 1:46,54f).

Zechariah also praises the Lord, the God of Israel, for the redemption of his people, for He "has raised up a deliverer of victorious power from the house of his servant David" (NEB) in remembrance of his holy covenant with their father Abraham (1:68-73). Simeon, having waited for the "consolation of Israel" ("the restoration of Israel" in NEB), adds to his joyful words that "this child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel" (Lk 2:34). The above references definitely are to Israel, who has the promise of Abraham and David. In Luke's birth narratives, **Jesus means the redemption of Israel,** that is, of the Jewish people (Tannehill, 1985:72). If we consider that the Lukan sources must have come out of the earliest church community, especially the apostles, we should not fail to see how strongly the earliest church hoped for the salvation of Israel.

Although this particular emphasis predominates in the birth narrative, Luke also takes up the theme of the universality of salvation. In Luke 3:3-6 he brings it up by quoting Isaiah 40:4-5:

> Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all **mankind will see God's salvation.**

When Luke repeatedly takes into account Jesus' speaking about the coming of the destruction of Jerusalem, he may be anticipating the shift of salvation from Israel to the Gentiles (Lk 13:33; 19:41-44; 21:20-24; 23:27-31). When Luke introduces Stephen, and the Jews' rejection of his words, this shift is obvious. Also when Paul responds to their rejection by turning his attention to the Gentiles (Ac 13:44-47; 18:6), it is highlighted in Luke's narrative. And Luke ends his work with the final declaration of Paul to the Roman Jews:

> Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen! (Ac 28:28).

In this account attention should be given to the term σωτηριον, which was used in Luke 3:6 in the quotation from Isaiah 40:5, and this is the only other time this word is used by Luke. Luke seems to intend to unify his whole work in

the two books by pointing back to the beginning so that he may testify to the universality of salvation (cf. Tannehill, 1985:71).

But for Luke this shift is not the end; if so he would not have started his narrative with the hope of salvation for Israel. Even though the hope for Israel had not been fulfilled by the time of Luke, it was not being forgotten as if it were unimportant. Luke describes the hope of the disciples on the road to Emmaus looking for the redemption of Israel (Lk 24:21); it is reminiscent of Luke 1:68 and 2:38. Again the subject is brought up in Acts 1:6 by the disciple as it is the reminiscence of Luke 1:32-33 and 68-69. Davies observes about this verse that "hope of the control of the land by Israel here is unmistakable" (1974:261). When Jesus responds to his disciples' question by denying that they can know the time, He does not mean to reject the possibility of a restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Tannehill, 1985:76). Although the disciples' expectation of the imminent coming of the kingdom on earth is rejected, the expectation of the kingdom of God as such is not annulled (Davies, 1974:265).[1] This is shown in Acts 3:20f which anticipates Jesus' coming again as the king in accordance with the Prophets.

Luke's account does not fail to see the importance of the covenantal promises for the restoration. As we see in the earlier part of Luke, the salvation of Israel is mostly linked with Abraham or the fathers. Behind 1:27,38 lies the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 18:14 (although the word "promise" is not used); behind 1:58f is Genesis 17:7; 18:18; 22:17. NEB introduces the word "promise" in 1:37 and 55, and this, according to Davies, does justice to the intent of the texts concerned, although this is not justified by a literal translation (1974:263). In 1:70-75 the idea of a promise governs the observation of the salvation of Israel.

> salvation from our enemies.... to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham... (1:71-73).

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[1] We will leave out the debate about the disciples' concept of the nationalistic kingdom of God. But the rejection of the disciples' nationalistic idea must not be taken as if implying the rejection of the kingdom of God as a whole.

In 1:55 and 73 Abraham is named, indicating his covenant. In Acts, Luke does not miss the concept of the covenant, either. Peter proclaims in 3:25-26: "And **you** [with the nominative pronoun for emphasis] are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed". The promises to Abraham are recalled for the salvation of Israel again and again (7:5,8,17,32,44,46; 24:14; 26:7; 27:23; etc.). In Luke's narrative, Paul also strongly stands for this hope, as said by Paul in Acts 26:6f:

> And now it is because of my hope in what **God has promised our fathers** that I am on trial today. This is the **promise our twelve tribes** are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me.

The reference to the twelve tribes indicates "the national concentration of the hope" (Davies, 1974:260f). In the negative response of the Jews to the calling of hope by Peter and Paul, Luke experiences a deep emotion of sorrow. The emotions of anguish, pity, and sorrow are not caused by anti-Semitism, as some may understand it (cf. Tannehill, 1985:81).

We finally see Luke's purpose in combining the particularities and the universalities. In the earlier part of the Book of Luke, Luke purposely put the two together in one sentence (Lk 2:29-32; cf. Ac 1:8). The background of Luke's mind in 2:29-32 is, as Davies asserts (1974:261), based on the promise as given in Genesis 15:15, the promise of worldly salvation being the due of the offspring of Abraham. Luke develops this idea in accordance with the historical narrative. He starts with Paul's missionary travels. Paul preached in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch on a Sabbath day (Ac 13:26): "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God ["and you God-fearing Gentiles" in NIV], to us the word of this salvation is sent out" (NASB). In Acts 15 the conference of the Jewish leaders of the earliest church is described. The subject of the conference was the "rebuilding of the tabernacle of David", with the problem of accepting the Gentiles into the church. James reiterates the prophecy of Amos: "After **these things** I will return" to rebuild the tabernacle, i.e., after the Gentiles have come in, or

after the present world-wide witness. The result of the conference is that **God's programme for Israel had not been abandoned by the coming of Gentiles into the church** (Ryrie, 1978:1674 on Ac 15:15- 17; cf. Young, 1971:165). The salvation of Israel and the Gentiles is the hope of Paul and Luke as stated in Acts 26:22-23:

> I [Paul] am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen - that the Christ would suffer and as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to **his own people** and to the **Gentiles.**

In conclusion, Luke does not incline to one side as far as the ethnic groups are concerned. We see Luke's broken heart for the stubborn Jews when he describes their rejection. Luke does not provide the shift of the Gospel from Jews to Gentiles on the ground of a human point of view, but he views it based on God's own plan of salvation which has already been revealed in the Old Testament. In Acts 13:46, Paul declares that since the Jews have rejected the Gospel, he will "turn to the Gentiles". But he never neglects the Jewish people, nor does he cease preaching to them (Ac 26:22). Even in the final scene, Acts 28:23-28, Paul is still preaching to the Jews. Reading Paul's final words, we must not think that Paul declared that he had now finished all concern for the salvation of the Jews. The quotation from Isaiah in verses 26-28 is filled with the bitter and anguished words that disclose Israel's failure. In such a situation, God commanded Isaiah to go out and teach them, and promised that the stump would be left for a new life (Is 6:9-13). And so, Paul continued his teaching as long as he lived (28:30). Neither the Isaianic text of the quotation nor Paul's remark is intended to cut off any possibility of the salvation of Israel. Behind these words of Isaiah, there is a strong wish and hope for them (see the whole context of Isaiah 6:9ff). And so, we may turn our attention to Paul himself.

2.2 IN THE PAULINE LETTERS

Because the apostle Paul was called to the Gentiles and his Letters were written mostly to the Gentile-dominated churches, he gives a strong impression of the

universality of the Gospel. A clear account of Paul's God-given apostleship to the Gentiles is first found in the first two chapters of Galatians. Paul claims that his apostleship was the result of a direct revelation from Jesus Christ (Gl 1:1,11-12; cf. Rm 15:5-10) and not out of his kinsmen or out of the Jerusalem church (1:16-17). He testifies to his apostleship to the Gentiles as being the same as Peter's calling to the Jews. In Romans 1:1f and 15:15f, he reaffirms such a calling to the Gentiles.

It is significant that when he proclaimed his desire to turn from the Jews and preach to the Gentiles in Acts 13:47, he quoted Isaiah 49:6:

> "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. **I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth"** (Is 49:6).

In Acts 26:18, Paul was using a very similar phrase to Isaiah 42:6-7 (following LXX) when he described his missionary work to Israel and the Gentiles. In all the indications in Galatians 1 and 2, Romans 9-11, and Acts we have a strong impression that Paul was aware of God's plan of salvation toward the nations, given by the Old Testament prophets (esp. Isaiah), and of his calling from God in accordance with that plan (cf. Lindars, 1961:223f).

Then did Paul himself simply ignore the salvation of Israel? Or did he believe that God had rejected his own people? Neither is correct. So often Paul's heart has been misunderstood, and 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 has been usually quoted in this respect. Paul seems here to declare that all Jews are the enemy of the church as if the Jews have no room in the future plan of God.

> For you, bothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last (1 Th 2:14-16).

In Acts, we saw that Paul had experienced bitterness from his own people although some had accepted his message. Now Paul is grateful upon hearing

of the Thessalonian Christians' endurance under suffering (1 Th 1:6; 2:14f). Thus the main purpose of Paul's writing these verses is to encourage them on the one hand, and to pronounce a severe judgment on the Jews on the other hand.

In Paul's accusation, directed at the Jewish persecutors, a serious question arises as to whether ἡ ὀργή is regarded as eschatological wrath or punishment that has already appeared in this world. Some who hold no future hope for Israel suggest that the word ἐφθασεν be taken as a prophetic aorist, similar to the many aorists in the LXX describing future events (Findlay, 1914:77; Morris, 1959:92). Morris, taking the eschatological setting, argues that εἰς τελος, means "the pronouncement of absoluteness in the eschatological sense, and the wrath has fallen upon them **completely** or **forever**" (Morris, 1959:92). In this case the present passage does not agree with Romans 9-11 which testifies that God has never cut them off completely. This theory is also difficult to accept because such an application of the aorist is not found elsewhere in the New Testament even though it is in the LXX (Munck, 1967:63). The more reliable interpretation would be that ἐφθασεν (aorist) is to be taken as past in meaning, signifying that the hardening of the Jews has already taken place, and the effects of it continue. It also means the hardening of the Jews as a completed action in the past. Munck holds:

> It is probably most reasonable to assume that the wrath, namely the hardening of the Jews, set in when they rejected the gospel of the crucified Messiah, before their attempts to prevent the Christian preachers from addressing the Gentiles. The persecution carried on by the Jews is therefore a symptom of their hardening, and this hardening is radical.

The reference may also be to the scene when Pilate washed his hands and laid the responsibility for the death of Jesus upon the people. They answered "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" (Mt 27:25).

One more difficulty comes from the very debatable words εἰς τελος (v 16). They must not be interpreted as an expression of futurelessness for Israel, but should rather be held to mean "complete", or "in full measure" (Coetzee,

1965:203). Paul is looking at the history of Israel. There has been a growing apostasy in the religious history of Israel from the Old Testament to New Testament times. It finally reached a climax in the killing of Christ and the persecution of the Church in Paul's generation. Thus, Paul expresses the greatest judgment upon the extreme apostasy of the present generation. It must not be taken as meaning a cutting off of Israel from the history of revelation.

Some may take Mark 12:1-9 as a text to prove the total rejection of Israel. Mark 12:9 reads: "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others". But the Mark text must not be taken to imply that the Jews as a whole have no hope. They can still hear and respond to the Gospel. The Gospels and the preaching in Acts still look forward to the salvation of Israel. Thus the texts together must not be seen as an eschatological judgment, but rather as a severe condemnation of the present sinfulness of the people, especially the religious leaders in Jerusalem (Davies, 1984:127).

Paul in the present text goes against a special part or group of Israel, not against Israel as a whole. The text focuses on the countrymen of Thessalonia who persecute the believers, and it is compared with the people in Judea who persecute the Christian church in Judea. Coetzee understands the Jews in this text as follows (1965:203): They are in the first place the Palestine Jews, who have persecuted the church of Jerusalem; in the second place, among all the Palestine Jews they are the people of the present generation, of Paul's time. When Paul mentions "Christ", the "prophets", and "us" in v 15, the "prophets" are not, for Coetzee, the Old Testament prophets, but the New Testament prophets who have an intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus. The "Lord Jesus", "prophets", and "we" are intimately connected with each other. Thus the persecutors against them are the contemporary Jews in Palestine. In the third place, according to Coetzee, Paul does not condemn all the Palestine and contemporary Jews, but only those who severely persecute

the believers. They are a part of Israel who consider themselves as maintaining the Jewish national law-religion, and who consider Christians as the national religious enemy.

Davies also points out the fact that the term which Paul used for the people is "Jews", not "Israelites" (1984:126). He asserts that the general Jewish failure did not include all of Israel and does not imply that the church has taken over the function of Israel (1984:126). Paul is thinking not of the Jewish people as a whole but of unbelieving Jews who have violently hindered the Gospel. Therefore, we may conclude that when he wrote the Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul had not made up his mind about the final destiny of Israel, and his later Epistle to the Romans reveals his further wrestling with this question.

As we have affirmed, Paul did not neglect the salvation of Israel at all, even though he was the chosen instrument to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul clarifies the particularity and the universality in one passage, saying "for I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy" (Rm 15:8f). Although Isaiah in the Old Testament and also Paul in Romans testify to the salvation for the Gentiles, they do not relinquish the main emphasis on Israel. The Gospel starts from Jerusalem and then goes out to the end of the world (Is 66:19; Rm 1:16; 2:9) and returns to Israel (Is 66:20; Rm 11:11,23f,25ff); the nations come to share in the salvation of the God of Israel (Is 45:20-25; cf. 2:1ff; Rm 11:18; Eph 2:12ff), then after the fulness of the Gentiles' incoming, Paul envisages "all Israel will be saved" (Rm 11:26a). Thus, Paul's mission to the Gentiles is due to his recognition of the steps of the revelation-historical plan of Yahweh: First, Israel's "no"; the Gentile's "yes"; but the final climax for the "restoration of Israel's glory" (cf. Munck, 1967:42f, 276f; Richardson, 1969:146).

In conclusion, the New Testament passages confirm the idea of the Old Testament about the salvation of Israel and the salvation of the nations. Although the Old Testament placed emphasis on the particularity (the salvation of Israel), while the New Testament gives more attention to the salvation of the Gentiles, there is no contradiction at all. The argument of the New Testament is entirely based on the idea of the Old Testament, and develops its characteristics from the Old Testament.

3 THE NAME ISRAEL

Because the argument that the (old) Israel is replaced by the church in the new dispensation prevailed widely among Christian scholars, in this chapter we will define the term Israel in the usages of the New Testament. If the term Israel is used for the church, then all the promises of the Old Testament and all the sayings about particularity in the New Testament (which we studied in the previous chapter) can possibly be applied directly to the church, and they are of no value to Israel in the present era. To test whether the promises of the Old Testament are still valid to Israel or not we must prove in what sense and for whom the name Israel is used in the New Testament. Thus, we will examine whether the name "Israel" is ever used for "the church".

3.1 IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

In the synoptic Gospels the name Israel appears 27 times in all; while "Jew(s)" appears 6 times in the narratives of birth, trial, and crucifixion.

3.1.1 The meanings of Israel

In the Gospels the word "Israel" is used with the connotation of various meanings (see esp. Gutbrod, 1965):

(1) It is used in the connotation of "the people of God" (Mt 2:6; Lk 2:32; cf. Mt 15:31; Lk 1:16,68): When the words "the people of God" or "the God of Israel" are used, it means that "they are God's chosen people" or "He is the God who has chosen Israel" (Gutbrod, 1965:384). In Luke 1:16 and 68 the word Israel was first used, and then it alternates with λαος. In Matthew 8:10 εν τωι Ισραυω seems to impart particular stress in referring to the people of God (cf. Mt 8:10/Lk 7:9; Mt 10:6; 15:24; 19:28; Lk 1:16; 2:34; etc.) . Thus it is evident that the term "Israel" can mean "the people of God" (Coetzee, 1965:66). But "Jews" is never used for the people of God in the synoptic Gospels.

(2) It is used in close connection with the Messiah: "the Christ, the King of Israel" (Mk 15:32); "the comforter of Israel" (Lk 2:25). He is "for glory to your people Israel" (Lk 2:32). He is the King of "Israel". It means the king Messiah is intended for his people, Israel, but for no one else. The term "Jews" cannot be used for Him as "the King of the Jews" (Gutbrod, 1965:384).

(3) It relates to the covenant. The indication of Israel as the covenant people (or nation) is one of the essential aspects in the New Testament. When salvation is announced for "Israel", the term or idea of the covenant often follows (see ch. 2.1).

(4) It also does not fail to mean "the historical-ethnic nation".

Looking at different aspects of the name "Israel" mentioned above, we must be careful about separating those meanings one from the other. Gutbrod, although he specially emphasises the special sense of the meaning, namely "the people of God", seriously fails to bring up all those aspects at one time. For him, the term is sometimes used for "the people of God", but at other times it just means the ethnic nation. In contrast with Gutbrod's observation, our contention is that, while the term carries special meaning, it does not lose the sense of the ethic nation (cf. Coetzee, 1965:67). When it is specially emphasised in "the connection with the Messiah King" it does not mean that it has lost all other meanings. For instance, in Luke 1:68-73 the word Israel (connoting the ethnic nation) is changed into the words "the people of God";

and its qualification as God's people is assured by "his covenant" with Abraham, the forefathers; then the account runs through "David", "our fathers", and finally to "us" of the present time. Zechariah reminds us of God's merciful redemption through the whole history of his nation. All the history of Israel reflects God's covenant and his promises (esp. the promise of the Messiah King to David): At the time of the patriarch Abraham (v 73), the great King David (v 69), the prophets (v 70), "us" in the midst of "our enemies" and "all who hate us" (v 69), and even into the future (v 74). Above considerations clearly testify that the term "Israel" can embrace all four meanings at once.

In Luke 1:54-55 the name "Israel" is also closely related to the covenant. Here Israel is regarded as Abraham's descendants. The words and idea of Luke's text have actually been adopted from Isaiah 41:8 where "Israel" is referred to as the descendants of Abraham and God's chosen people. Thus here the term "Israel" refers to the ideas of the covenant, of God's special people, and of the historical connotation. God's mercy has been shown through all the history of Israel, the descendants of Abraham grounded in the covenantal promises to Abraham. The covenantal aspect also closely relates to the phrase "the God of Israel" in Matthew 15:31 and Mark 12:19. Matthew 2:20 narrates Jesus' calling out of Egypt to "the land of Israel". Matthew's intention is to grasp the idea of the Messiah's relationship with his land of "Israel" (Coetzee, 1965:69). Matthew 10:23 implies the ethnic-historical nation Israel too. The words "the children of Israel", "the house of Israel" (Lk 1:16; Mt 27:9), "the house of Jacob" (Lk 1:33), "the house of David" (Lk 1:29,69; 2:4), and "the house of Judah (Hb 8:8) clearly show the connotations of the historical-ethnic Israel and the covenant together.

In conclusion, "Israel" is "the offspring of Abraham" and has the promises to Abraham; i.e., the offspring are promised the land (Gn 13:13f; 15:16; etc.), they are to be very great in number (Gn 13:16; 15:5; etc.), and they are to be a medium of blessing to others (Gn 22:18; 26:4). The whole history

since Abraham has proved those promises. In the New Testament, "Israel", the historical-ethnic Israel, is still nothing other than "the offspring of Abraham", holding on to the promises made to Abraham.

3.1.2 The meaning of "Jews"

While the name "Israel" is used by the Jews for themselves, "Jews" is only used by non-Jewish people in the synoptic Gospels. In Matthew 2:2 the wise men from the East mentioned "the king of the Jews", perhaps to mean the political sense of the nation. At the trial, "the king of the Jews" is used by Pilate and the Roman soldiers; and on the cross the written notice of the charge reads "the king of the Jews" (Mk 15:9,12,18; Lk 23:37; Mt 27:39). This term, used by the Romans or by other people, implies the political or ethnic connotation only. The word "Jews" is never used in connection with the covenant or with God's election.

3.2 IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Contrary to its use in the synoptic Gospels, the name "Israel" occurs only four times in the fourth Gospel, but "Jews" about 70 times. The term "Israel" is clearly used here in connection with Jesus, the Messiah of the promise (1:31) and the Messiah as the king of Israel (1:49; 12:13). In 1:31 the name of Israel is also closely related to the covenantal promise, and means God's special people (cf. Coetzee, 1965:71).

The term "Jews" is used in complicated ways, but the clearest indication is that it is used in contrast to the name "Israel". It obviously relates to the contemporary dominant religions of Judaism, such as the Pharisaic or Sadducaic sectors, which is in contrast to the pure religion of Israel. Another strong aspect of the usage of "Jews" is the connotation of the empirical-nationalistic sense. The usages of both names are fully in accordance with those of the synoptic Gospels.

3.3 IN THE BOOK OF ACTS AND THE PAULINE LETTERS

Acts also shows the similarity of the meanings of "Israel" to those meanings found in the Gospels. The name appears in connection with God and the Messiah (1:6; 4:10; 5:30-31; 13:23-24), with the concept of God's people (4:10; 4:27; 13:17; 13:24), and with the covenant (5:30; 13:17). The name clearly also indicates the historical-ethnic connotation by the words "house of Israel" (2:36; 7:42) and by "children of Israel" (5:21; 7:23). The name "Israel" very often appears in references to past history (7:23,37,42; 13:17) where the historical nation is emphasised.

The usage of "Jews" is in full agreement with that of the Gospels, commonly indicating the empirical-national sense or the contemporary dominant religious sense.

It is no accident that Paul uses the two terms "Israel" and the "Jews" in the distinctive way he does in Romans. The "Jews" is used in the general sense of a people who are contemporary, who belong to the nation, and who practise the traditions of the law. But sometimes he intentionally uses the term "Israel" because the name implies that they are God's people (cf. 9:4). It is notable that the apostle avoids the term "Jews" in the passage of Romans 9-11 where he deals with the salvation of Israel. Although "Jew" occurs twice in this section (9:24; 10:12 in dealing with their hardening), Paul prefers "Israel", using it ten times here and nowhere else in the letter (Harrison, 1976:100). Romans 11:1 is particularly important as regards the full significance of Israel. To the question whether God has rejected his people, Paul clearly declares that he is an "Israelite", namely that he is a member of God's people (cf. 9:4). Thus it is very natural for Paul to appeal πας Ισραηλ σωθησεται to the promise made to their fathers (v 28) (Gutbrod, 1965:386f).[2] In 2 Corinthians 3:7 and

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[2] Gutbrod's point is very clear when he says that it should not be παντες ‘οι Ιουδαιου σωθησονται (1965:387), which may imply the individual members of the people without specific reference to the covenanted people of God.

13 "Israel" indicates the nation which has a special position in the Old Testament revelation. Also it has a strong ethnic connotation through the words "the descendants of the patriarch" and a historical connotation by mentioning the history of the Old Testament. In Ephesians 2:12 "Israel" is the people who are with God, with Christ, with a "hope", and who possess "the covenant of the promises". But the verse also shows the particularity of Israel by mentioning her distinction from the Gentiles.[3]

One passage, Galatians 6:16, is greatly debatable. Gutbrod expresses the idea that "it is most probable that here Israel has the new meaning of the people of God, the church" (1965:387). Gutbrod himself, however, concludes that:

> Apart from this polemical passage and 1 Cor. 10:18 Paul does not seem to use Ισραηλ for the new community of God. For, as we may see from Romans 9-11, he neither could nor would separate the term from those who belong to Israel by descent (1965:388).

On the other hand the name "Jews" is never used to show God's mercy and his covenant promises. The most distinctive figure for "Jews" is the people who possess the law which can not provide the way of the salvation and which hinders them from accepting Jesus Christ (Rm 2:17; 3:28-29; Gl 3:24-28; Col 3:11; etc.).

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[3] It is an important question what the phrase της πολιτεια του Ισραηλ in Ephesians 2:12 means. If πολιτεια is a genitive subjective, it is identical with "Israel", and the phrase may be translated into "the state of Israel". Then, the Gentiles also participate in the state of Israel in the following verses. If it is so, Israel can be called the church. Coetzee strongly argues, however, that the context does not allow this interpretation. According to him, the phrase must be taken as a genitive objective, and πολιτεια can be "citizenship of God's kingdom in which Israel has already participated, and in which the Gentiles now also participate. For details, see Coetzee, 1965:212ff.

In grasping Paul's conscious use of the terms, we must note that while "Jew" would stress merely the individual and racial aspects of his nation, the people of "Israel" emphasises the significance of the covenant people of God, different from any other people on earth (Harrison, 1976:102). The term "Israel", especially in the context of Romans 9:4 and 5, must be seen in direct connection with the promise of the covenant (Sanday & Headlam, 1945:229). In the New Testament the name "Israel" continues to have a salvation-historical significance (Cranfield, 1979:461). It is obviously distinguished from the "Jews". And there is no indication at all that "Israel" is used for the church except just one doubtful passage in Galatians 6:16 (we will discuss it later).[4]

The usage of Israel in the New Testament testifies that Israel is still the same Israel to whom the promises of the restoration were given by the prophets and the same Israel as the covenantal nation.

4 THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL IN ROMANS 9-11

4.1 AN INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The problems with interpretations

In the interpretation of these chapters, we face various serious problems. As described by de Villiers (1982:199) there is no agreed interpretation of Romans 9-11 by New Testament scholars. The first problem in understanding

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[4] The passage 1 Corinthians 10:18 is often argued as a text to prove that Israel is the church. It is that: The phrase "Israel after the flesh"(KJV) presupposes the "Israel after the spirit", and the latter is applied to the church in contrast to the former. However, Coetzee rightly denies this idea: First, this is a pure assumption and there is no clear evidence that Paul had in mind the church as the "Israel after the spirit" when he used "Israel after the flesh"; secondly if Paul distinguished between the "Israel after flesh" and "Israel after the spirit", it is understood at its best as a distinction between Israelites according to the flesh of Abraham and the true believing Israel out of the Israelites (see Coetzee, 1965:221).

these chapters comes from separating this section from the rest of the letter (Dodd, 1959; cf. Robinson, 1979:108f) (we will deal with it in the next sub-chapter).

The second problem may arise from a partial and dogmatic interpretation, as Cranfield observes, that "the letter is interpreted partly as an exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith, which leaves the largest part of it unexplained" (1979:449). Against the interpretation initiated by the Christology of systematic theology, Cranfield utters the following criticism:

> The Church persists in refusing to learn this message...., that it is unable to believe in God's mercy for still unbelieving Israel, and so entertains the ugly and unscriptural notion that God has cast off his people Israel and simply replaced it by the Christian Church (1979:448; cf. M. Barth, 1983:26).

For the serious question: "Did God reject his own people?" the answer is to be found in exactly the same way in the Old Testament by the fact that "God is faithful to Israel; so the Gentile Christians have good reason to rely on him" (Barth, 1983:30) (cf. Ezk 20:41; 34:30; 36:22f; 37:38; 39:37; see Part III, 1.2.3 and 5.3.3). A god who was unreliable in his relation to Israel could not be trusted to be faithful to any nation or person. This is, for Paul, also the hope of the church which He chooses according to his pleasure, and He will not be shaken by men's weakness (cf. Rm 9:14-24). Therefore, God's mercy over the whole of Israel is the basis and essence of the faith which confesses that there is nothing in the heights or depths which can separate those called by the divine love manifested in the Messiah (8:35-39; cf. Jr 31:35-37; see Part III, 4.7). The whole passage Romans 9-11 indeed intends to glorify the faithfulness of God (3:3; cf. Jr 33:11).

4.1.2 The relationship of Romans 9-11 to the rest of the Book

In handling this debatable section, we must keep in mind Paul's being aware of several practical areas of specific problems. Through chapters 3-11 we encounter a remarkable issue, concerning the problem of the Jews and the law.

For the contradictory issues, the faith and the law, Paul declares himself a Jew who had become a Christian. On the way to Rome, from whence all Jews had been expelled by Claudius because of controversies with the Christians, he writes "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (1:18). All the problems and issues around justification by faith and the law can be solved in Paul himself. He is a Jew, and remains a Jew even while he has been redeemed by faith. He condemns the Jew of the law, but he accentuates "being a Jew" by putting "the first" for them. But what then about justification by faith? If there was justification by faith alone, why then the Jews? That is the question Paul tries to answer in chapters 9-11 before he goes to Rome as a Jewish Christian (cf. Boers, 1982:4). The conclusion of his argument would be that "justification by faith and God's election of Israel are not contradictory, but are both integral to God's plan of salvation" (1982:4). Paul deals again and again in various directions with what the positions of the law and the faith are and what the position of Israel is.

In 1:16b-17 the theme is first introduced: The Gospel is God's saving power, and in the Gospel God's righteousness is being revealed. But the Gospel must be understood in the light of its definition in 1:1-3: "the Gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David". The Gospel was promised in the Old Testament; to whom was it promised? The answer to that question requires an understanding of the position of Israel, too. Because God is sincere in his promise, Paul recognises that the question of the Jews involves the question of God's faithfulness (Cranfield, 1979:446).

In 8:23 Paul mentions the hope "for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies": If God's purpose with Israel has been frustrated, then what sort of a basis for Christian hope is God's purpose? Thus Paul reminds them again and again: "What advantage is there in being a Jew...?" (3:1); "Will their untrustworthiness destroy the trustworthiness of God?" (3:3b); "What shall

we conclude then? Are we any better?" (3:9); "Where, then, is boasting?" (3:27); "Do we, then nullify the law by this faith? Not at all!" (3:31); "What then shall we say did our forefather Abraham in accordance with the flesh receive?" (4:1); "Is this blessing only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised?" (4:9); "What shall we say, then? Is the law sin?" (7:7); "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?" (8:33); "It is not as though God's word had failed" (9:6); "What then shall we say? Is God unjust?" (9:14); "I ask then, did God reject his people? By no means!" (11:1); "Again I ask, Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery?" (11:11); "Do not boast over those branches" (11:18); "**For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either**" "How much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!" (11:25); "I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers,...and so all Israel will be saved" (11:25,26).

In all the above observations, we find that there is a remarkable material unity from chapter 1 to 11 (cf. Cranfield, 1979:445; de Villiers, 1982:199f; Boers, 1982:1-11). In chapters 9-11 Paul addresses the theme within the framework of the question of the salvation of Israel. In the negative approach, he claims that justification leaves no basis for the law and the physical descendancy of Abraham, but only for faith. On the other hand, Israel too is saved by faith, by the faith of Abraham as its source, and the purpose of Christ is to secure the promises to the fathers (15:8). There is no "new covenant", only a re-affirmation of the old one through Christ. The Christian is integrated into that covenant as secured by Christ. The Gentile Christian has no grounds whatsoever on which to pass judgment on the Jews.

Robinson stresses that the whole section is in effect the answer to the question in 3:9: "Are we any better?" The answer is "Not at all!" (1979:109f). The Jews have immense privileges (9:4-5). But these give them no security for righteousness; whereas they made great efforts with the law, but never attained to it (9:30-31). Then how about the Gentiles? Are they any better?

No! There is no reason to boast of themselves because God did not reject his people. He shows the keeping of his promises to their forefathers by retaining the remnant in every generation. As He did not forget his covenants with the forefathers of Israel and gave the promises of the restoration through the prophets in the difficult time of the exile, He will keep his promises in the difficult time of the present. Then, Paul's final message is that "all Israel will be saved" (11:26).

4.2 PAUL'S PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS OWN NATION (RM 9:1-3)

Paul starts these chapters with the expression of his compassion towards his kinsmen. They are των αδελφων μου, των συγγενων μου κατα σαρκα. While he incorporates himself in Christ, and in the pure religion of God's people, he could not forget the identity of his nationality (cf. Coetzee, 1965:195f). Even though he has suffered very much from the Jews, his intimate relationship with his nation leads him to sorrow for their unbelief (9:2). His sorrow is great (μεγαλη), unceasing (αδιαλειπτος), painful (οδυνη), and deep (τη καρδια μου).

His love and sorrow for his people lead him to his willingness to sacrifice himself for them, 9:3, as Moses did in Exodus 32:32. Despite a lack of linguistic identification, there is a parallel between Moses and Paul. In Exodus 32:32 Moses calls "But now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin - and if not, please blot me out from Thy book which Thou hast written!" (NASB). The wish of both Moses and Paul to suffer for their people arises from the situation where those people have sinned unforgivably. Moses appeals to God's promises to the forefathers:

> "Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever" (Ex 32:13).

Paul also perceives that it is the people of Israel to whom all the promises must be fulfilled through the Messiah, Christ, who according to the flesh was

of Israel (9:4-5). With this mention of Christ and his relationship with Israel according to the flesh, the dominant theme in the revelation history of his chosen people has been sounded - right at the beginning of Paul's treatment of the Israel problem (Munck, 1967:33).

Paul's compassion for his people was not animated by mere nationalism or chauvinism. His compassion for his kinsmen is not based on his emotional reaction to the accusers, as Barrett surmises that Paul had been accused of indifference to the fate of his compatriots (1977:175f); but it is controlled by the Holy Spirit who revealed to him the scheme of revelation history: "I speak the truth in Christ - I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit" (9:1). Paul's expression, "I am speaking the truth...I am not lying" (cf. 2 Cor 11:31; 12:6; Gl 1:20; 1 Tm 2:7), testifies to what he has already expressed about the Jews and their fate (2:5, 17-24; cf. 1 Th 2:14b-16), and he is going to do so again (9:31,32; 10:2,3,16,21; 11:7-10). The reaction from his kinsmen is to be expected, which is that "Paul hates us" (cf. Ac 21:28f; 24:5f; Hendriksen, 1981:309). Paul's clarification is necessary, which is that he truly and deeply loves his kinsmen, but Christ even more. Thus he affirms that his words are not mere human utterances.

Paul's grief stems from his awareness of the continuing fact of the special position of Israel as the people of God (Ridderbos, 1959:207). Even though the majority of the people do not accept the Gospel, he has hope for them, so that he calls them "the people of Israel" (v 4). Κατα σαρκα reveals Paul's presuppositions concerning Israel in these chapters. Despite his calling as an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul remarkably expresses his deep desire for the salvation of his own people in Romans 11:13-14.

> I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

The sentence is very emphatic with the words ειμι εγω, διακονιαν μου, and μου την σαρκα. While he is called apostle to the Gentiles, he strongly stresses here that Israel is "my flesh" and that they are "my kinsmen according to

my own flesh" in 9:3. In 11:13,14 Paul distinguishes between people of other nations and those of his own nation, by calling them "you Gentiles" (v 13) and "my flesh" (v 14).

He accentuates the fact of the truth **"in Christ"** (i. e., "in accordance with the standards which apply to one who is in Christ" by Cranfield, 1979:451) and of being under the guidance of "the Holy Spirit" (v 1). Paul carefully takes up the issue concerning Israel from Christology, which has been the main subject against the law of Judaism. His sadness results from his love for Him whom the Jews have repudiated (Hendriksen, 1981:310). It is clear that Paul wants to solve the problem with Israel in Christocentric theology (cf. v 5a). It is undeniable that the major hermeneutics in chapters 9-11 is "theocentric" (10:4-13, esp. v 9) (see for further discussion: Dinter, 1979:67ff; Davies, 1977:34; cf. Barrett, 1962:18).

We may compare Paul's sorrow and agony towards his kinsmen with that of Jeremiah. The majority of the people went astray, and they never paid attention to the Words of God through the prophet Jeremiah. They were destined to perish and some of them would be taken into exile. But Jeremiah's words of "salvation of the people" did not come from his own will but were controlled by Yahweh's Spirit. And Jeremiah could see the future of Israel in the scheme of his plan of the revelation history. So does Paul see the same future of Israel.

4.3 WHAT PRIVILEGES DOES ISRAEL HAVE? (9:4-5)

> Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Paul resumes his conviction of the Jewish "privileges" here after 3:1ff.[5] By seeing the list of privileges, we will be helped to understand Paul's

[5] Some incline to use the word "advantage" (Dinter, 1979:69,99), but the majority of commentators use the word "privileges". Davies clarifies

presuppositions to his view of Israel. This passage in not an idea new to the New Testament, but based totally on the Old Testament. Before we go further, we must clarify our position by refusing to accept a wrong understanding of these verses. By listing these privileges Paul does not intend to encourage the Jews in their pride but express his wish for their salvation (cf. Ellison, 1978:30ff). Those lists were written for an explanation of Israel's unbelief. But at the same time, they are not intended for the purpose of a critique against Israel's "self-congratulation" (cf. Barrett, 1962:176f). In this list Paul, on the one hand, reflects his pain over the irony because all these facets of his people's history should, presumably, have led them to recognise Jesus Christ, who comes forth from them according to the flesh (Dinter, 1979:69); and on the other hand, he shows the distinctive nature of Israel which firmly holds the fate of the nation Israel. We have to remember that Paul starts this account with the name **Israelites**, not with **Jews**.

"**Theirs is the adoption as sons**": It is to Israel who had come from the loins of Abraham that God gave the adoption (cf. Is 51:2). They have been accorded the privilege of having been adopted as "God's firstborn" (Ex 4:22), his "own possession" (Ex 19:5), his "son" (Hs 11:1), his "people" and his "chosen" (Is 43:20). The adoption separates Israel from all the nations to be God's very own (Hendriksen, 198:311). The adoption extends to the people of Israel who were also called "children of God" (Ex 4:22; Dt 14;1l Hs 1;10l 11;1). It is remarkable, as Cranfield points out, that in the Old Testament, when speaking of God as the Father of the individual Israelite, it refers to the future, not the present (Hs 1:10) and the thought of God's fatherly relationship to the individual was implicit in the conception of Israel's adoption (Ps 27;10; 103:13). In spite of their unbelief, Israel's adoption is, for Paul, a continuing reality (Cranfield, 1979:461).

"privilege" as a favour gratuitously conferred by God, and "advantage" as a benefit which is not conferred but which emerges inevitably under certain circumstances. But he urges just a distinction without a difference (1984:146, esp. fn 86).

"Theirs the divine glory": ἡ δοξα, indicating "the divine radiance". It can be called "the visible presence of the invisible God among his people" (Sanday & Headlam 1945:230; Hendriksen 1981:312), and generally described in the fire, sometimes in the cloud, especially in the Shekinah (Ex 40:34; Lv 16:2) and the temple of Jerusalem (2 Chr 7:1,2). By means of this "glory", too, the people of Israel had been separated from all other nations (Hendriksen, 1981:312).

"The covenants": Israel has the privilege (it can not be called merely an advantage) because God has claimed them as his people, and they still remain God's people; because the covenants belong to them. The plural of the "covenants" has often misled some to accepting a two covenants theory: one (the Sinai covenant) for the Jews and the other (the new covenant) for the church (for a good survey of this debate, see Pawlikowski, 1980:33-68). The plural rather indicates that all covenants with Abraham (Gn 15:17ff; 17:1ff), with Israel at Mt Sinai (Ex 19:5; 24:1), with David (2 Sm 23:5; Ps 89:3f,28f; 132:11f), and the new covenant, belong to Israel. God-fearing people of Israel, such as David (2 Sm 23:5); Mary, the mother of Jesus (Lk 1:54,55); and Zechariah (Lk 1:72,73), rejoiced in these covenants (Hendriksen, 1981:312).

"The giving of the law" may refer to the actual giving of the law to Moses, which relates to the covenants in the previous word (Cranfield, 1979:463). It is significant to an understanding of Paul's view of the law: the law as divinely given, and having the law as the excellent privilege of Israel (see Part II, 3.2.6). The law looks forward to the Messianic hope, and the Messianic hope looks forward to the reward of keeping the law perfectly.

"The temple service" may primarily refer to the sacrificial cult as having been the true worship of God (Cranfield, 1979:463). Not only does the temple service itself have the significant meaning of worship of God, but it is also

significant because from its beginning it pointed forward to Christ and his redeeming work.

"The promises", which Paul had in mind, may refer primarily to those made to Abraham (cf. 4:13-22; Gl 3:16-29; cf. Gn 12:7; 13:14-17; 17:4-8; 22:16-18), but in using the plural it would extend to the repetition to Isaac (Gn 26:3f), Jacob(Gn 28:13f), and even to the people of Israel through Moses (Cranfield, 1979:464; Hendriksen 1981:313). The greatest promise must be seen in the reference to "the coming of the Messiah" (2 Cor 1:20; 7:1; cf. 2 Sm 7:12,16,28f; Is 9:6f; Jr 23:5; 33:15; etc.; Sanday & Headlam, 1945:231; cf. Cranfield, 1979:464; Hendriksen, 1981:313).

"Theirs are the fathers" may primarily refer to the three patriarchs (cf. 11:28; 15:8), and possibly also to other outstanding figures of Old Testament history such as the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob (cf. Ac 7:12,15) and David (cf. 1:3; 4:6-8; 11:9,10; Cranfield ibid:464; Hendriksen ibid:314f).

"And from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all..."[6] This item serves as a climax. It is the supreme dignity of the Israelites that the Messiah Himself is, as far as his human nature is concerned, of their race. He is the end (fulfilment) of the promises (2 Cor 1:20), the end of the seed of the patriarch (Gl 3:16), the end of the temple worship (Lk 23:45; Hb 9:12), and the end of the law (Hb 10:1), the mediator of the covenant (Hb 9:15), and the Saviour of the world. The birth of Christ from Israel is the strongest proof of the special privilege of Israel and also the strongest argument against a final condemnation of Israel, although they rejected Christ in the present time (Ridderbos, 1959:28). Paul carefully takes up the issue concerning Israel from Christology, which has been the main

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[6] There is a great diversity of opinion about the doxology. The main argument will be where the punctuation is to be placed. The view that it affirms Christ's divine nature and his Lordship over all things is more strongly suggested. See for further discussion: Robinson 1979:111f; Sanday & Headlam 1945:233-38; Cranfield 1979:464- 469; Hendriksen 1981:315f.

subject against the law of Judaism. His sadness results from love for Him whom the Jews have repudiated (Hendriksen, 1981:310). It is clear that Paul wants to resolve the problem with Israel in Christocentric theology.

Why does Paul set forth all these privileges? Sanday & Headlam explain that Paul intensifies his sorrow by the remembrance of the position which his countrymen have held in the Divine economy (1945:232). His grief is so profound because he sees that not only does Israel reject her own Messiah, but thereby Israel seems to suffer the loss of what God has promised (Nygren, 1978:356). The problem is that the covenant by which they were bound to God seems to have been broken for them, and they would not alone inherit the promises. God's word of promise seems to have lost its validity (1978:356). The Messiah has come, and Israel, his own people, seems to be cut off and rejected from the Messianic blessings.

We find in this text two purposes of Paul: His sorrow toward his kinsmen and his hope through remembering the special position of Israel as the chosen people. This hope is based entirely on the Old Testament and the old history of Israel.

4.4 HAVE THE PROMISES LAPSED? (RM 9:1-29)

4.4.1 Who is Israel? (vs 6-29)

It is not as though God's word had failed (9:6a).

Once again in verse 6 Paul touches on the same question as in 3:3-4: "Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?". The answer is "Not at all!" But, isn't it the reality to be accepted that they were rejected because of their faithlessness? Paul seems to have fallen into a deep dilemma between God's faithfulness and the principle of the Gospel, namely attaining righteousness by faith (Nygren, 1978:357). It was the same dilemma of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, when they saw the destruction of their nation. According to the (old)

covenant, the nation had to be destroyed because they broke the covenant. But because Yahweh remembers his covenants with the forefathers of the people, He could not annihilate them entirely. The prophets' hope rested on God's grace and a solution was finally found by the making of a new covenant with the people by Yahweh.

For the question of whether the promises have lapsed? Paul's mind is very firm on this matter as found in 3:4: "Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar" (NASB). If one admits that God's faithfulness to his promise is too sound to be shaken, he must answer the question, "no". Then, the main-line church has started to solve the problem by the opinion that "they have been fulfilled in us, the true Israel of God the church of the Gentiles, because the Jews have hardened themselves in their unbelief, and have thus already and irrevocably refused salvation" (cf. Munck, 1967:35). For this reason the Gentile church takes over the promises of the Old Testament as its own, and regards it as being no longer for the Jews. But Paul's view differs from such a view. Munck cites:

> Even though he maintains in this passage that God in his sovereign will chooses whom He wishes, one must not fail to add: whom he wishes from Israel (1967:36).

Munck is right when he sees that "Paul does not here visualise 'Israelites' who do not belong to the physical Israel as being within the new Israel of the church" (1967:36), nor does he intend to transfer the term "Israel" to the church. By Israel Paul clearly has in mind Jacob (from whom the name Israel came) as a historical, ethnic entity, in which "Israel" is a contemporary participant (9:3; 11:1; Dinter 1979:72). This physical historical emphasis is maintained throughout these chapters. Kasemann, refusing the notion that the promise was "spiritually fulfilled" in the church, takes seriously the fact that Paul fails to provide a corresponding του πνευματος in verse 8, but rather he speaks of τεκνα της επαγγελιας ("the word of promise") (1974:252). When Paul speaks of τα τεκνα της σαρκος in verse 8 in contrast with τεκνα του θεου...της επαγγελιας, there is no attempt to "spiritualise" one group and reduce the other to a "merely earthly" reality (Dinter, 1979:102).

On this matter we may argue as follows: Who are the "children of the promise" in verse 8? It is not the "natural children" but "children of the promise". Paul means that it is not "Ishmael" but "Isaac"; It is not "Esau" but "Jacob". Then can we say Isaac and Jacob were spiritualised children, while Ishmael and Esau were the natural? Not at all! Isaac and Jacob were the physical children of Abraham, they were not to be spiritualised in order to participate in the promise. It was natural that the promise of the covenant with Abraham was kept through Abraham's natural descendants. But what Paul here intends to say is that not all natural descendants participate in the promise like Ishmael and Esau (cf. Coetzee, 1965:169f).

"**It is not as though God's word had failed**" (9:6a): This half-verse is thought to be the sign and theme of the whole of chapters 9-11. Ουχ ‘οιον δε ‘οτι, a mixture of two idioms, ουχ ‘οιον and ουχ ‘οτι, both of which mean "it is not as if", seems to be the implication of Paul's wish to exclude what he has just said in verses 1-5 (Cranfield, 1979:472). In other words, what he had just said about his grief for his fellow-Jews is not going to be true permanently. Εκπεπτωκεν is a strong word in a sense of "the falling of life" in the figurative illustration of flowers fading (Ja 1:11; in the LXX Job 14:2; 15:30; Is 40:7). ‘Ο λοδος του θεου here means "the declared purpose of God" (Sanday and Headlam, 1945:240). Cranfield renders it:

> ....for the declared purpose of God, which Paul has in mind, is clearly God's gracious purpose of election which has been declared in the bestowal on Israel of the privileges listed in vv. 4 and 5, and the divine election is indeed..., 'the sum of the Gospel'. What Paul has said in vv. 1-5 is certainly not to be understood as implying that the present unbelief of the great majority of Jews has succeeded in making the word of God ineffectual, in or frustrating God's declared purpose of grace (1979:473).

Thus, the real answer to the question in verse 9a must be that God's words have been valid in "**the true Israel within Israel**".

The remaining verses of this section imply the theocentric principle that whomever He wants He chooses, and whomever He dislikes He rejects. The

emphasis is upon the gratuitous nature of God's call. The negative mould of verse 6, "not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" accentuates the negative aspect of the rejection of the majority of the people. However, there is a positive aspect, too. Since God's rejection of Israel is not total or complete, the true Israel of the remnant is left to keep the nation (v 8) (Hendriksen, 1981:317). "**The children of flesh**" in verse 8 must here be seen as "all who are of Israel" as in verse 6 - not to be thought of as the unbelieving Jews, appealing to the picture of Galatians 4:23,29 - and in the sense of "all natural or physical offspring" (Hendriksen, 1981:317, fn 268).

The same argument is found in the prophets of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In response to the Jerusalemites' pride, the prophets' answer was clear that not those who remained in Jerusalem and the land of Israel were the chosen, but the small portion of the exiles were now to be the whole house of Israel through whom God would work the restoration of the nation (see Jr 24 and Ezk 11:14ff). His promise had been fulfilled in every detail, but only along the narrow line of Abraham's descendants. The line of the covenant would run through Isaac, not together with Ishmael; it was Jacob, not Esau (9:13; Gl 3:9,29).

4.4.2 Abraham's offspring (Gl 3:29; Rm 4:16)

When we talk about the children of the promise here, we must clarify what Paul thinks of Abraham's offspring in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. Paul says:

> Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring - not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all (Rm 4:16).
>
> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gl 3:29).

Those texts declare that the Christians, out of the Gentiles, became the spiritual offspring of Abraham through their faith and without physical participation in the nation of Israel.

4.4.2.1 Galatians 3

After having stated the principle of justification by faith and not by works (Gl 2:15-21), Paul turns to define Abraham's sons as those who constitute the participation of the promise, against the Jewish conviction that Abraham is their father. Paul might be informed that the opponents, possibly nationalistic Jews, urged the Gentile Christians to give up Paul's advice and to observe the law and circumcision which would be the only way of the participation in Abraham's blessing (cf. Davies, 1984:127). Persisting in appealing to the law, Paul argues that the divine promise was embodied in a settlement which was made long before the law was given. Therefore the divine promise cannot be annulled or modified by the law as illustrated in 3:15, "no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established", either.

Paul, on the other hand, claimed that Abraham himself had obtained the blessing on account of his faith, and so do his sons. Moreover, the promise to Abraham concerned not simply Israel but all peoples (3:8; cf. Gn 18:18). In Genesis 22:18 the promise goes: "and through your offspring (σπερμα, seed) all nations on earth will be blessed" (cf. Gn 26:4b; 28:14). Those original texts in Genesis indicate that the nations would be the objects of the blessing. Concerning the blessing which the Gentile Christians obtained, Paul enters his argument in **the double-fold application** of the promise, namely, in **(or with) Abraham** (Gn 18:18) and **in his offspring** (22:18) all nations would be blessed. In these two contexts, Paul uses the "offspring" in a two-fold sense: Individual and corporative.

(1) **The seed as an individual :** When Paul observes that the word "seed" is not plural, he is right. The word "zr'" never occurs in the plural form in the MT except once in 1 Samuel 8:15. But the collective function of the word always refers to the group or to a representative individual of that group (McComiskey, 1985:20). Then Paul had freedom to take the second concept into account at this point. Lenski acknowledges that Jesus as well as Abraham

is named as a representative (1961:158-59). When Paul adopts the promise "through your seed all nations will be blessed" (the third blessing of Abraham), he, taking the grammatical form of the singular, attributes to Christ the role of principal heir and the representative of the nation. Because He is the true "offspring", through Him the nations are blessed. In Isaiah 9, the promise of the "offspring" applies to the Messiah in the relationship with David's line (9:7; cf. 11:1; 23:5; Zch 3:8; 6:12; etc.). The extent of the beneficial rule of the Davidic king for Gentiles as well as for Jews is found in Isaiah 11:10, Amos 9:12 (cf. Ac 15:15-21). Thus if Paul found that Christ is the heir of the promise, he is correct.

(2) **The seed as a corporate concept :** Secondly, Paul applies the Abrahamic blessing to the nations **in (or with) him** (Abraham). With the quotation of Genesis 18:18, Paul asserts that those who have faith, through which Abraham obtained justification, become his offspring (Gl 3:6-9). Paul also takes into account the collective sense of "the seed" in order to identify the body of believers as the offspring of Abraham (Rm 4:13-18; 9:6-8; Gl 3:7,23-29).

However, this cannot nullify all meaning of the physical offspring of Abraham. In the New Testament the word σπερμα also refers to the physical descendants of Abraham (Lk 1:55; Jn 8:33,37; Ac 7:5f; Heb 11:18). He also affirms that the covenants and the promises to Abraham still belong to the people of Israel (Rm 9:4f; cf. 11:28). Thus we must not allow anyone to threaten the existence of Israel with this verse. If there is any application of Abraham's promises to the Gentiles, it must be limited in the third blessing. Paul does not bring the Gentiles into the place of Israel, neither does he attempt to remove Israel from her place. He explains how the promise to Abraham concerning the nations has been fulfilled through faith. He spiritualised the Gentile believers to be Abraham's children in order to obtain the promise, but not the nation Israel. Also he does not apply all three promises of Abraham to the Gentile believers, but just the third one of the blessing of the nations. Thus we

cannot find in Galatians any strong evidence that Israel was finished as a covenanted people.

4.4.2.2 Romans 4

When he says "He [Abraham] is the father of us all" (4:16), Paul still distinguishes between Abraham's kinship of Israel and of the Gentile believers: "Not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham" (Afrikaans translation more clearly indicates: "hulle is 'die wat nie alleen uit die besnydenis is nie, maar...'"). Paul clearly postulates two ways of becoming the children of Abraham: In nature and in spirit. Paul puts himself in the first group, when he says "Abraham, our forefather" (4:1), and "the father of the circumcised" (v 12). It is very natural for the natural children, who still keep and walk in the faith of Abraham, to be called his children. They are not spiritualised at all (Coetzee, 1965:173). Another group, the Gentiles, participate in the true Abrahamic kinship through the same faith that Abraham himself had, but they have been spiritualised to be able to participate in it.

Within the seed of Abraham there are still two groups, "those who are of the law" but also "those who are of the faith of Abraham"; thus Abraham can be called the father of **us all,** both Israel and the Gentiles. When Paul mentions Abraham first in Romans 4:1, he identifies him as "our forefather according **to the flesh** and also in verse 12 as "the father of the circumcised," i. e., the natural children, Israel. Thus we must not diminish the meaning of "Israel" by looking at some passages which speak of the spiritual offspring of Abraham. Although the spiritual offspring of Abraham participate in all the blessings of Israel, the physical offspring of Abraham still keep their reality in the true believing Israelites, namely the remnant. The idea of keeping Israel through the remnant flows from the prophets of Jeremiah and Ezekiel to Paul.

4.4.3 Illustrations of the chosen sons (Rm 9:7-18)

Paul first takes an example from Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac only was chosen to carry out God's promise to Abraham, while his elder brother Ishmael became the founder of an alien people, who even persecuted the sons of the promise. Secondly, Isaac's two sons faced a similar fate. God selected the younger to be the founder of Israel, while the elder, Esau, became a father of Edomites, who also participated in persecuting Israel (cf. Ezk 25:12-14). The text tells about God's choice of the nation Israel. It is therefore speaking neither of individuals and their selection for salvation, nor of the spiritual Israel, the Christian church (Munck, 1967:42). It speaks rather of how God selected his people **Israel** to carry on the chosen stock, and sent the other away outside the promises. Again verses 14-18 show God's sovereign acts for salvation: **God chooses whom He wishes.**

It is so in the case of Pharaoh, too. Pharaoh is the third example of the non-chosen who persecuted the chosen people. He represents the Egyptians in this illustration, as Ishmael and Edom do (Munck, 1967:47). The illustration of Pharaoh shows, first, God's free sovereign will: "God has mercy on whom he wants, and he hardens whom he wants to harden" (v 18). The sentence denotes that two contrasting forms and two different ways serve the divine purpose of the revelation history. He chooses some for a positive role in relation to his purpose, with a conscious and voluntary service, and others for a negative role in relation to his purpose with an unconscious, involuntary service (cf. Cranfield, 1979:489). It seems to be apparent that the hardening of which Pharaoh was the object was final. But it does not mean that divine hardening is always final (Hendriksen, 1981:326; also see Cranfield, 1979:489, he criticises Calvin's interpretation of the final fate of the two groups). The Gentiles who would be figured as participating in the hardening of Pharaoh are now being taken up, and in the same manner so will Israel be (v 29; 11:7b,11,25ff).

Paul's whole account here, however, reflects the situation of his time, and his experience of suffering from his own people. Only a few of the Jews have received the Gospel, inheriting the promises to Abraham, while others, for whom no word of promise has sounded, have turned away, and have given themselves to persecution for the true chosen people.

4.4.4 From the potter's lesson (vs 19-29)

Now we seem to arrive at the shifting point of the revelation history. It seems to be that God's sovereign will for salvation departed from the line of Abraham's physical seed to the Gentiles (vs 24-26). "That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not obtained it" (vs 30,31). Even so, no one can accuse God (v 21). However, when we are careful to look at the real meaning of the verses, we will find a different truth from the above presuppositions.

A correct understanding of the paragraph from verse 22 to 29 is very important because so many take it to prove the ruin of Israel and her replacement by the church. The new paragraph from verse 22 starts with ει δε θελων ‘ο θεος...: "But what if God..." (NEB). All modern English versions do not translate "but", only the NEB. Since many miss a new and antithetical point of this verse, this paragraph has led to more misrepresentation and bad theology than any other (Robinson, 1979:117). Cranfield also takes δε seriously into account, saying:

> The δε which connects vv.22-24 with v.21 is important....but in the present passage it is specially significant, because it makes the connection between Paul's similitude and what is, in effect, his application of it. His use of δε, rather than of ουν or αρα, indicates an **element of opposition** and implies that he regards his illustration as **inadequate.** What follows does indeed draw out the point of v.21, but, in doing so, it also brings out the fact that **God's ways are not just like the potter's** (1979:493).

There it is no question that the illustration of a potter in Jeremiah 18:1-11 shows the Lord has sovereign freedom over his chosen vessel. Whenever He

likes He can remould it to his heart's desire. But, says Paul, this is not what **God has done; He has not scrapped the vessel He made, reworked, and started again; but He has endured with incredible patience the vessel which has appeared fit only to be smashed** (Robinson, 1979:117).

Another serious debate comes from the incomplete sentence of a participial clause, questioning whether it would be understood as concessive ("although") or as causal ("because"). Taking "although" it renders that:

> (But) What if God, although willing to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? and He did so in order that He might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory (cited from NASB).

In this case God has suffered "in order to show the riches of his glory and mercy upon the vessels" which are the unbelieving Jews, and even to the Gentiles, too (v 24).

When we take the meaning as "because" it will be as follows:

> What if God, choosing [because he wishes] to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath, prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory (cited from NIV).

The latter, without the conjunction "but", was made in accordance with the statement in verse 22. God's suffering is, for the latter, caused by "prepared destruction" and by manifesting "his wrath" and "his power" upon the vessels which are the Jews, and it has been done to prepare for others, namely the church.

It is difficult to make a decision from the grammatical argument.[7] It must, however, be considered in the context. The question here must be put in accordance with what has been said about verse 6 (de Villiers, 1982:203): Has God's promise for Israel lapsed? Not at all! Robinson takes a close parallel

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[7] For a lengthy grammatical argument one may consult Cranfield 1979; Barrett 1962; and Murray 1965 who holds a different opinion to the others.

between verses 22-23 and verse 17 (1979:118). In the previous paragraph Paul pictured the absolute impartiality of God, illustrating it from Old Testament history. In the conclusion of the paragraph he speaks of vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath. As an example of the former, he cites Moses (the representative of God's people) and as that of the latter, Pharaoh (the representative of God's enemies). In that section (v 17), Pharaoh, hardening his heart, was taken up for a double purpose: (1) For a demonstration of God's power; (2) and for a proclamation of his name through all the earth (Nygren, 1978:371). Now the roles are ironically reversed in the present paragraph. Israel represents the vessel of his wrath, the Gentiles the vessel of his mercy. But, just as God did not simply wipe out the other (represented by Pharaoh), so now He, bearing a great suffering, has not simply wiped out Israel, though this indeed is all that Israel has deserved (Robinson, 1979:118). He is using Israel again, as He did Pharaoh, for the purpose of a demonstration of his wrath, at least for the present, and of a proclamation of his glory to all nations. Through Israel's hardening, the Gospel has gone forth into all the world, and there it has made "vessels of mercy" both of Jews and, even more, of Gentiles (Nygren, 1978:371). Although He wanted to give a demonstration of how his wrath operates with great suffering, He will not do what the potter may do. Cranfield says:

> It is that the relations between God's patient enduring of vessels of wrath, the showing of his wrath, and the manifestation of the wealth of his glory upon vessels of mercy, will be illuminated by 9:30-11:36. We shall see there that the ultimate purpose of that patience of God toward rebellious Israel which is depicted in 10:21 includes the salvation of rebellious Israel itself (chapter 11): but we shall see also how the divine patience must first show up the full seriousness of Israel's sin (9:30-10:21)....in order that ultimately He may have mercy (1979:497).

God's desire expresses his purposes: In the first place his desire is to show the wrath upon the Jews and that through their hardening salvation might come to the Gentiles; secondly his desire for "enduring" the Jews. To prove this, Paul appeals to the Scriptures. First he quotes Hosea to prove the unmerited generosity of God to those who are not "his people"; and then quotes Isaiah to show how remnants of Israel have been saved. Paul, however, makes a point in the quotation of Isaiah 1:9 that not merely a remnant has been left,

but through sheer grace a germ has survived (Robinson, 1979:119). Israel has not been utterly wiped out, like Sodom and Gomorrah were.

To accomplish this revelation history the idea of the "remnant" forms the most crucial argument. In verse 29 Paul again returns to the theme of the remnant in keeping the core line of Israel in the revelation history (see ch.4.8.3). God's endurance of not pouring out his wrath upon his people and sparing the remnant among the Israelites is not an entirely new idea of Paul, but it is found through the prophets (also Jeremiah and Ezekiel, see Part II, 1.2 and Part III, 1.2).

4.5 ISRAEL'S REJECTION AND THE GENTILES' ACCEPTANCE AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD (RM 9:24-10:21)

Quoting Hosea 2:22 Paul in 9:25 enters into a long discourse dealing with the Gentiles' replacing the rejected Jews. By using the words αλλα και it emphasises εχ εθνων, not εχ Ιουδαιων. Paul testifies that God's sovereignty is the same in both cases, both in referring to Israel as God's people and in referring to the Gentile believers. It shows that the Gentiles were not God's people previously, but now by his grace have become "just" as the Jews. Thus God includes both Gentiles and Israel in God's people. There is now one unity. There is an intimate relation between the two (10:11-12).

Paul in this section goes back again to his old theme, the contrast between righteousness by the law and righteousness through faith (Nygren, 1978:379). Paul sets the two ways of salvation in sharp contrast with each other, namely the way of the law and the way of faith. With the coming of Christ, judgment is pronounced against righteousness by the law. Then Paul leads to a conclusion with the key statement in 10:4: "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes".

Then, quoting Scripture (Dt 30:12-13) Paul clarifies the absolute truth, that is, "righteousness through faith in contrast with righteousness by the law". Paul understands from the Old Testament text that Christ has come from heaven; He has arisen from death; salvation is at hand; and the word about this salvation is very near us. To confess Christ as Lord and to believe in his resurrection are the basic things for being a Christian (10:9). But Israel does not confess Christ as her Lord, and neither believes in Him. What is the reason? Paul points to the facts in verses 14 and 15:

(1) One who does not believe in Him cannot confess Him;

(2) One who has not heard of Him cannot believe in Him;

(3) One cannot hear without someone's preaching;

(4) None can preach unless God sends him.

Now Paul examines what the problems for the Israelites are (v 15-20).

(1) Did God not send preachers? Yes, He did! Isaiah 52:7 proves it.

(2) Did they not hear? Of course they did as Isaiah 53:1 says. Paul goes one step further.

(3) "Again I ask, did Israel not understand?" The answer is found in the Law and the prophets of the Scriptures. Deuteronomy 32:21 gives an answer: Because they provoked Him to jealousy and anger, He declares that "I will make you envious by those who are not a nation", i. e., Gentiles. The Gentiles understand and come to faith when God speaks the message (the Gospel) to them, so how can Israel be excused? Paul adds another verse of the Scripture, Isaiah 65:1: "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me". Even though there is doubt as to whether the original Isaiah statement referred to the Gentiles, Paul applies it to the Gentiles.

However, verse 21 strongly indicates that Paul is turning dramatically in favour of Israel: "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people". The discussion of their hardening is not the main point that Paul tries to convey. The verse contains a two-fold idea: It looks back

to what has already been said concerning Israel's disobedience and makes clear that this disobedience is precisely a rejection of God's steadfast grace which brings out its full enormity; and it looks forward to what is going to be said of hope for Israel, depicting vividly the steadfast patience of that divine grace for those who are continually disobedient (Cranfield, 1979:541f). Yahweh's mercy is greater than human guilt.

The problem of the hardening of the Jews was the same through out most of the history of Israel. It was the great problem of the prophet Jeremiah and Ezekiel as much as in the time of post-exilic prophets and Paul. All the answers to overcome this problem for the prophets and Paul rest on God's steadfast endurance and his mercy upon his people.

4.6 HAS GOD REJECTED HIS PEOPLE? (RM 11:1-24)

4.6.1 Introductory remarks

In this section Paul goes more deeply into the issue of the nation of Israel.

> I ask then Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin (vs 1,2).

Paul once again turns to the core of the issue which has been under discussion from the beginning of the ninth chapter. God once chose Israel and made her his particular people. But in chapter 10 we saw the totally negative response of Israel. Paul, however, finished the chapter with little hope of a favour for Israel. Romans 11:1 presupposes the whole tenor of thought developed in the preceding passage (Munck, 1967:105). The idea of the immediately preceding verse 10:21 naturally leads the particular statement of 11:1: "I ask then, Did God reject his people?" The verb απωσατο and its tense here denote a radical severance and cancellation of the ties between God and Israel (de Villiers, 1982:209).

In the answer (v 2) Paul adds ‘ον προεγνω to ουκ απωσατο ‘ο θεος τον λαον αουτου. The fact that God has foreknown his people - προγινωσκειν implies election of Israel as his people - makes it impossible that He should now reject them (Munck, 1967:107). In the whole of chapter 11 Paul gives negative answers in response to the question of verse 1, showing that:

(1) God still keeps the remnant (vs 1-10);

(2) The exclusion of the majority of Jews is temporary (vs 11-24);

(3) God has a deeper and wiser purpose concerning the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles than mankind can understand (vs 28-36).

4.6.2 Illustrations (vs 1-10)

4.6.2.1 Paul uses his own case as an example

Paul is assured that the elect in the present, of which he himself is one, prove that God has not torn Himself away from the nation. Paul is arguing against the Gentile Christians in Rome by saying "Does anyone need proof that God fulfils his promise and has not rejected Israel? Well then, look at me" (Hendriksen, 1981:361). He belongs to Israel, a descendant of Benjamin, and yet he is a Christian. Paul, a saved Jew, presents himself as a warranty that God has not rejected his people in the plan of the history of revelation (Coetzee, 1965:200). He argues that even a single true Israelite proves sufficiently that God has not forsaken his own people (Coetzee, 1965:176; Munck, 1967:106).

4.6.2.2 The remnant of Elijah's time

Paul takes another example from those in Elijah's time, recorded in 1 Kings 19:1-18. Munck asserts that "It would seem natural to Paul, at the time he was writing the letter to the Romans, to point to Elijah as the figure in **Heilsgeschichte** who has a task to fulfil toward his unbelieving people" (1967:109). There are similarities between the situations of Elijah and Paul

himself. In Elijah's day the prophets had been slain. He thought that he alone was left. In Paul's situation the Jews have killed the prophets (1 Th 2:14,15), even the greatest Prophet (Ac 7:37), and Paul himself has also been threatened. Paul is now going up to Jerusalem with gifts from the Gentile churches for the poor of the church in Jerusalem. He knows how dangerous it will be in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, as was true in the days of Elijah, now only true believers are left (Hendriksen, 1981:362). It was God's purpose in grace to have kept the remnant. If it was the case then, it will be so now by his grace (v 4).

Paul asks "What is grace?" If any one places emphasis on human responsibility, feeling that because the Jews rejected the truth, they were cut off, then "**grace would no longer be grace**" (v 6). The election is guaranteed by his grace, not by human works. His grace is shown only through keeping the remnant in the present time, but the remnant is not the final purpose of God. Cranfield clarifies it:

> It was God, by his own decision and for the accomplishment of his own purpose, who made the remnant to stand firm; and for this very reason its existence was full of promise for the rest of the nation. The existence of a remnant, whose faithfulness was their own meritorious achievement would have no particularly hopeful significance for the unfaithful majority. But precisely because this remnant was preserved in accordance with the election of grace and not on the basis of works, its existence was a pledge of God's continuing interest in, and care for, the nation, a sign of God's faithfulness to his election of Israel as a whole (1979:547).

The remnant is "the chosen by grace". Israel has also been "the chosen by grace". But Israel always remains in its capacity of the covenant people through the remnant at the present time: At the time of Elijah, at the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and at the time of Paul. Thus the remnant serves as a guarantee that the nation would not fall.

The important fact concerning the remnant which we must point out is that Jeremiah and Ezekiel did not stop at the point of looking at the remnant at the contemporary times. But they spoke about the restoration (or revival) of the nation (see the most clear illustration of it in Ezk 37). Thus the concept

of the remnant must be seen in the light of the future hope for the nation (for further discussion of the concept of the remnant, see ch. 4.8.3).

4.6.3 "Riches for the world" (vs 11-15)

> Again I ask, Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! (vs 11,12).

Paul warns the Gentile Christians, who might hold the view that the present obduracy was God's final judgment upon Israel, and that salvation is now open only to the Gentiles. His message is: "You Gentiles, your salvation is a result of Israel's fall; then how can you boast!" The salvation of the Gentiles and of Israel is not, for Paul, a matter of two separated and mutually exclusive groups. God has decided to use Israel's disobedience to the Messiah as an occasion to bring salvation to the Gentiles. Paul is looking forward through the window of revelation history. In the scheme of revelation history, they are closely linked together, and the one has to come after the other.

The divine purpose for Israel is suggested in the word ἵνα πεσωσιν (might fall), and this is actually put negatively, παραζηλωσαι (jealousy), and then finally σωσω τινας (may save some). The word παραζηλωσαι has already been introduced in 10:19 as the quotation from Deuteronomy 32:21, where it is said that God's purpose is to make them jealous of a "foolish nation". Thus the divine plan for the salvation, according to Paul, is clear in that it started from Israel, and turns to the Gentiles, and will then turn back to Israel. Nygren remarks:

> But it was precisely for the age of the Messiah that the Jews waited. It is the hope of **Israel** which has come to fulfilment for the Christians. It is the God of **Israel** on whom the Gentiles have come to believe. It is the promises originally given to **Israel** which the Gentiles now inherit. How could they who belonged to **Israel** see all this without a pang in the heart? (1978:395f).

Paul's calling as an apostle to the Gentiles gives him a unique significance within revelation history. It was a great turning point in history when Paul

turned to the Gentiles. Paul personally has an urgent expectation of the (second) coming of Christ (1 Th 1:10; 2:19; 4:16; 2 Th 1:10; etc.). It is, however, promised after the Gospel has been preached to the whole world (Mt 24:149). At the time of his writing he has completed his task of mission to the Gentiles in the East (Rm 15:19-24), and intends to proceed to the West (Spain) via Rome (15:25-32). However, he must have had the scriptural vision of preaching the Gospel to Israel as well, as Isaiah prophesied to the Gentiles first and then Israel finally:

> In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him... In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria,....., and from the islands of the sea (Is 11:10,11).

Again Isaiah repeats the same prophecy in the poet:

> He will raise a banner for the nations
> and gather the exiles of Israel:
> he will assemble the scattered people of Judah
> from the four quarters of the earth... (11:12)
>
> There will be a highway for the remnant of his people
> that is left from Assyria,
> as there was for Israel
> When they came up from Egypt (11:16).

Romans 11:13ff obviously shows that while he is busy as the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul believes Israel's salvation to be the supreme event within revelation history (Munck, 1967:122f). This idea is well expressed by the prophets, especially Haggai and Zechariah (see Part V, 10, the oracles of the nations). Although the Gentiles must be brought up in the last age, the prophets and the apostle Paul are, nevertheless, convinced that Israel is still the chief goal of God's will to salvation. It is therefore Paul's hope in exercising his task that when the fullness of the Gentiles be achieved, it will produce jealousy among the Jews that may lead to a change in the destiny of his people in accordance with God's saving will.

4.6.4 Their fullness (v 12)

Verse 12 puts a balanced stress on both sides, the Gentiles and the Jews. The unbelief of the greater part of Israel resulted in benefits for the Gentiles first, and then ultimately in conversion of the Jews themselves. At the present moment Israel, as the people of God, is represented by το λειμμα (by a small number). But he looks forward to the time when Israel, numbering a great multitude, will come to believe in Christ: and he contemplates with great joy the blessing which will follow as a result (Nygren, 1978:396). The consummation can come only when the **fullness** of Israel is saved.

What is the meaning of the word "fullness" in verse 12? ληρωμα always means in the New Testament "that which is completed" (Sanday & Headlam 1945:322). It may be antithetical to ʻηττημα in the same verse. The Greek term ʻηττημα seems to involve the idea of "defeat" (cf. 1 Cor 6:7). It is basically a military figure (Harrison, 1976:120). Here it may mean that "An army loses the battle because of heavy casualties" (Harrison, 1976:120). Israel's defeat has brought the riches of God's grace to the Gentiles on a large scale, and then she will win a victory on a large scale.

Cranfield rejects the common interpretation by taking the opposite view of ʻηττημα in the same verse, which is usually interpreted as "diminution" or "fewness" (1979:557). He disagrees with the numerical view of ʻηττημα, and even sees πληρωμα as a parallel to παραπτωμα (trespass) in the previous verse, so that the two meanings contradict each other. Also Cranfield sees that there is a difficulty in deciding whether αυτων refers to Israel as a whole or as a part. But he prefers the latter because all three αυτων must be identical to one another: Το παραπτωμα αυτων; το ʻηττημα αυτων; το πληρωμα αυτων. However, it would be too far fetched to see a parallel of πληρωμα to παραπτωμα. In the single verse we must also see the progressive process of revelation history. We do, as Munck does, reject suggestions that this verse merely indicates that "the remnant" would hear and receive the Gospel (1967:119).

Berkhof suggests that it must be considered together with the same word for fullness which is used of the Gentiles coming in verse 25 (1966:143). He sees that in both cases the word has a quantitative meaning, namely "full number" of the Gentiles and Israel in contrast to the small number of the remnant in Paul's day. Sanday & Headlam also prefer to render "their full and completed number". Berkhof refuses such translations of ἥττημα, which must be parallel to πλήρωμα, into "falling short" (the Dutch Bible of the Netherlands Bible Society) or "failure" (RSV) which may imply the shortcoming for justification by faith, and, says he, "linguistically and rhetorically this translation is a little far-fetched" (1966:143). If so, then it may refer to "fullness" as their full participation in faith in Christ in reference to quality, but not quantity. But we must not take one and repudiate another. It must be seen in its full strength of Israel as a whole that may imply both the quantity and the quality.

There is a kind of dialogue between Israel and the Gentiles: from ἥττημα of Israel to πλοῦτος of nations and from πλοῦτος of the nations back to πλήρωμα of Israel (cf. Munck, 1967:119). In this dialogue, there must be a sequence of time. Thus the view of "the fullness of the remnant", which implies the contemporary time, is not to be accepted. We are still expecting the wider spreading of the Gospel to the nations. And yet then we must have the expectation of it coming back to the Jews themselves (Daane, 1973:145). It is well explained by Isaiah 11:16, and Paul's idea is not departing from that of the Old Testament.

4.6.5 The miraculous character of the restoration of Israel (v 15)

> For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

Berkhof sees this verse in connection with Ezekiel 37 and his interpretation is that when God again turns to this nation, it means the re-establishment of

Israel as God's people (1966:145). We may agree with Berkhof's understanding that Paul's words are at least an allusion to Ezekiel 37, with an exclusive expectation of Israel's acceptance as God's last step towards the consummation. The passage here strongly shows the futuristic hope for the restoration of Israel. It is very distinctively described as the resurrection after death. God's miraculous power is strongly expected to be involved in such an event (see Part III, 6).

4.6.6 The images of "the dough of the first fruits" and "holy root" (v 16)

By using two images, verse 16 provides additional confirmation of the assertion that unbelieving Israel too has a future which is already implicit in verses 11-15. And the verse at the same time prepares the way for the next paragraph by its use of the imagery of root and branches.

In the first image, it reads: "If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy then the whole batch is holy". It reflects the offering of a cake from the first dough in Numbers 15:17-21. From the original text of Numbers it might be suggested that the fruits of the trees are to be regarded as "uncircumcised" until an offering has been made to God from them, and that it would be quite natural for the Jew to think of the offering of the first fruit cake as purifying the rest of his dough (Cranfield, 1979:564).

Then to whom does the "dough of the firstfruits" refer? Hendriksen sees it as referring to the patriarchs and that the branches, the descendants of these forefathers, are the people of Israel (1981:370). Ridderbos also thinks that the passage tells about the origin of Israel and that the one who was consecrated to God is to be Abraham (1959:257).

The next strong augment is the view that Christ is the first fruit, and the believers in Christ is to be the rest (Barrett, 1962:216). Some other modern commentators, Sanday & Headlam, Lagrange, Barrett, Murray, Cranfield, etc.,

assume that it is a reference to the Jewish Christians. Then it is understood that Paul means that the existence of Jewish Christians serves to sanctify the unbelieving majority of Israel as the faith of one partner in a marriage sanctifies both the other partner and the children in 1 Cor 7:14 (Cranfield, 1967:564). However, considering this together with the second image we may prefer the first interpretation.

The second image says: "If the root is holy, so are the branches" (v 12b). God chose Israel as a "holy" people. The idea of "holy" is not to be applied in the sense that all her members are righteous and holy in their manner of life, but in the sense that this people has, in a special way, been sanctified and separated from the nations unto God. God sanctified the root by his choice. From that holy root Israel has grown up (Nygren, 1978:398). Thus, if the branches are to be applied to the members of Israel, then the root must be thought of as their forefathers to whom God made the solemn covenant.

The images do not imply, however, that they will not be punished by God when they are disobedient. But because they have the basis or root, according to Paul, they can expect a better future by the grace of God (de Villiers, 1982:215). Thus Paul, in the next illustration, explains it further by suggesting that the Gentiles, who are grafted into the original tree, must remember that it is not they who sustain the root; the root, Israel's holy origin as being God's special people through the patriarchs, sustains them. These metaphorical passages strongly testify that Paul's dealing with the salvation of Israel is entirely based on the Old Testament. Paul confirms the promises of the Old Testament, rather than introduces another promise which can be applied only to the church.

4.6.7 The metaphor of the olive tree (vs 17-24)

4.6.7.1 Paul's way of using the metaphor

Looking at the metaphor, Paul is describing something that completely reverses anything that the farmer does. Grafting a twig of wild olive into a cultivated tree would be useless. This fact has often been taken to prove that Paul as a townsman had no idea what he was talking about (see Munck, 1967:128-130, for the details of this argument). What Paul says is not characteristic of the usual grafting technique. That does not trouble Paul. It is not by observing what happens in nature that Paul has come to his conception of the point he is presenting (Nygren, 1978:399). It must be noted, however, that Paul is here using the metaphor neither as an integral part of his argument, nor as a literary ornament, but simply as a medium for the expression of his meaning (Cranfield, 1979:566). In using the metaphor the verisimilitude of the metaphorical details is not important. The important thing is that the author's meaning should be quite clear (1979:566). Munck rightly sees that "Paul is not expressing something agriculturally practicable, but something miraculous", like the words of John the Baptist about raising up children of Abraham from stone in Matthew 3:9 (1967:128). Paul describes God's dealing in the revelation history by means of a metaphor which is as strange as the reality it represents. Furthermore, by seeing verse 24 on which the whole force of his argument depends, Paul might be fully aware that the whole process of his description is "against all nature" (Robinson, 1979:129). The emphasis falls on the theocentricity in the process of revelation history. God works for salvation beyond human logic: The salvation of Israel and the inclusion of the Gentiles has been a matter not of nature but wholly of grace.

The lesson of the metaphor is to remind us of the fact that both the Gentiles and the Jewish Christians depend on the "olive root", the patriarchal base established by God's covenant. The root of the tree is to be Abraham, and the branches are the descendants of Abraham. This illustration is based

totally on the covenant with Abraham. The figure of the olive tree emphasises that Gentile salvation is dependent on Israel's covenant relationship to God.

4.6.7.2 The relationship between the natural and the grafted branches on the one tree

The metaphor purposes to show the shaping of the Messianic people of God, namely the church (Coetzee, 1965:179); and its particular emphasis lies in the fact that the nation Israel still remains God's people, while Paul takes seriously into account the Gentile's partnership in God's people. The Gentiles have now been grafted onto the tree which previously consisted only of Israel. But there is still only one tree, not two. They together make the unity with variety and difference (Hoekema, 1979:200). Allis emphasises the one body of the church into which the Gentiles have entered, and which has its roots in the Abrahamic covenant, and to which all true descendants of Abraham belong (1978:109) (but he means that the church replaces Israel). Nygren also sets forth the fact that God's people are one and the same throughout the ages. Original branches may be broken off and new branches grafted onto the trunk, but the tree remains to draw up sap from its holy root, and this whole tree can be said to be the church (1978:399f). We cannot accept Nygren's idea of setting the word "Israel" alongside "the church", which means that it was called "Israel" but it is now called "the church". We may say that within the church (the tree), there is room for the true Israel and for the Gentile believers.

There is a continuity between Israel (in the Old Testament) and the church (in the New Testament) in terms of "God's people". Although there are many promises and predictions of the Gentiles' acceptance as God's people (see Part V, 10), the Old Testament constantly names only "Israel" as God's people , while the New Testament names "the church" as God's people. Verhoef strongly stresses the continuity between "Israel" and " the church", finding "the church" to be the fulfilled organisation of "Israel" through Jesus Christ. Thus

"the church", according to Verhoef is a continuation and extension of "Israel" (1967:63-65). Verhoef is quite right to emphasise the continuity between the two; and although in this sense "the church" can have the meaning of "a new (spiritual) Israel", the term Israel is not used like this in the Scriptures and "Israel" is not identical with the church. However, we must also recognise the continuity between "Israel" in the Old Testament and "Israel" in the New Testament. Although the people of God broadened into "the church", "Israel" still remains as the same "Israel" of the Old Testament. In other words, "the church" embraces both "Israel" and "the Gentile believers.

While the metaphor tells about God's people being one, there is still a distinction between the natural and the grafted. The difference may be noted: Some take root out of the original tree by nature, but others are grafted against nature out of the wild. The Israelite (true) branches still remain on the root (the covenant of Abraham) by the grace through faith, and they always naturally keep the qualification of the descendants of Abraham as the historical-ethnic nation (Coetzee, 1965:18). Verse 24 goes further by pointing out the difference of the grafts, how it would be easier for even the unbelievers of Israel, who are now cut off from the stem, to be grafted into their own tree in future than the wild ones could be. Davies states:

> Since Jews are by nature related to the root, while Gentiles were not, the probability that those Jews who had been "lopped off" could be reengrafted into the olive were more likely than Gentiles should ever have been grafted into it. The advantages of Jews for Paul are real advantages (11:24) (1984:145).

Contrary to the natural way of Israel, the Gentile believers are grafted onto the root. It was against their nature and they became spiritual descendants of Abraham. However, they did not become the natural Israel. Both are incorporated in being the people of the Messianic God in the same grace, in the same measure, and on the same root. Within God's people there are thus Israel and Gentile believers: While Israelites are the natural descendants of Abraham, the Gentiles have become the spiritual descendants through being grafted on by the same grace (cf. Coetzee, 1965:180f).

4.6.7.3 The warning against the grafted branches

Paul applies the metaphor of the tree to the relation between Israel and the Gentiles who have come to faith. "And you, though a wild olive shoot, have **been grafted in among the others and now share in...**":

Εν αυτοις (among them) shows that there are the remaining branches of the cultivated olive tree, the Jewish Christians. Συνκοινωνος means "a sharer together with the remaining native branches, i.e., with the Jewish Christians" (Cranfield, 1979:567). Thus we again refute the idea that the church, the Gentile Christians, replaced the tree of Israel as a whole.

Verse 18 clearly refutes such a wrong idea and warns the new people: "**Do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you**". It is clear to Paul that the Christian church has its roots in the Old Testament, in God's choice of the fathers. Through that choice the root was sanctified. Despite the alienation of Israel, God has not pulled up the root, for it is a holy root. Thus the Gentile believers have no privileges over Israel.

By comparing the worthiness of the Jews and of the Gentiles, Paul wants to take away any pride from both. Because Israel exalted themselves with circumcision and the law and refused the faith, they were cut off. In the same manner, if the Gentiles pretend to any honour in terms of their being grafted in, they would be left far behind.

4.6.7.4 The future for Israel

Paul clearly distinguishes between individuals and the nation of Israel as a whole. He puts the question, "why were they taken off?" It was "because of unbelief" (v 20). The tree is severely pruned. The ill-natured branches were cut off, and other branches from the wild were joined. The tree itself, after being pruned, however, is not cut off, but still remains with the rem-

nants. Once the tree was pruned in the time of the Assyrio-Babylonian invasion, and it was more severely pruned in the time of Paul, but it still remains the same tree with a small portion of the natural branches.

It seemed that the Gentiles had more privileges in the present, while Israel was rejected. But the Israel believers, the remnant, within God's people keep their own distinctive role which the Gentile believers cannot do, that is, they insure the survival of their nation Israel and look forward to God's salvation work for his own people at the end of world history. In verse 24 Paul implies a future hope for Israel:

> After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

4.7 PAUL'S SUMMARY OF ROMANS 9-11 (RM 11:25FF)

4.7.1 The taking up of this section into the rest of Romans 9-11.

Verses 25-27 have been the battle-field where a great controversy has raged throughout the centuries (Plumer, 1870:552). So often the passages have been tortured that Bartling (1941:641) says: "Paul's letters have had to submit to torture since Peter's days (2 Pt 3:16). The history of the interpretation of our particular passage along with its setting illustrates such exegetical torture". The most problematic misunderstanding has come from the interpretation of Calvin (1844:329ff) and his followers.

To understand this difficult passage correctly, we must consider the connection of this passage to the rest. First of all it must be clarified whether the present section is a conclusion or a newly developed idea. If it is the latter, the term "Israel" in verse 26 can have another meaning than that in the preceding part of the book. However, the following facts clearly show that the passage is the conclusion of chapters 9-11:

1) The introductory word γαρ of verse 25 shows the verse's strong connection with the preceding statement, particularly in verse 24 (Cranfield, 1979:571f). It shows that Paul does not start with a new case, but that he continues with the preceding subject.

2) As Sanday and Headlam point out, the γαρ connects particularly to the "mystery" (1945:334). The "mystery" tells about the divine purpose in history which was dealt with from 9:1 up to this point, and, indeed, from 1:1 on (cf. Davies, 1984:142; Käsemann 1974:301). Thus this paragraph of the "mystery" is a summary of his whole argument from chapter 9 to 11:24 instead of being merely connected with the preceding paragraph.

3) The contents of 11:25-32 completely agree with that of 9-11:24, as Coetzee convincingly shows (1965:203ff): "The full number of the Gentiles", the first part of the "mystery" very clearly goes back to 11:1-11 and 17-24 (esp. v 11). The hardness of Israel, the second "mystery", would last temporarily ("until the full number of the Gentiles has come in"), and it matches up with Paul's preceding conviction in 11:1,7,11 and 23,24. Verse 28a is taken out of the statement of 9:30-10:21; and verse 28b, "but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs", and this also goes back to the description of God's sovereign covenant with Abraham and his descendants in 9:6-29; 11:1- 2; 11:16-18. Verse 29 reminds us of Paul's appealing for God's faithfulness to his covenant in 9:6; 11:2; 11:16. Thus there is no new idea but a repetition of the old in the condensed sentences.

We may thus conclude that verses 25-32 are a brief summary of the previous discussion instead of bringing up a new idea. Paul finally wants to make clear the focal theme of Romans 9-11, namely that God, who is faithful to his covenant to Abraham and his descendants, has not rejected his people.

4.7.2 The mysteries of God's plan of salvation

Paul uses the word "mystery" to express emphatically God's profound plan of salvation (Batey,1966:222; Munck, 1967:131; Cranfield, 1979:572). Brown makes an effort to get its meaning from the Semitic background (1968:4-5). He testifies that in the Old Testament the decisions of the heavenly council were made known to the people by the Prophets who through visions had witnessed the council sessions (cf. Is 6; Dn 7:9ff). Bornkamm illustrates Daniel's vision as a key transition in the use of the word as an eschatological mystery (Dn 2:27f,47). Mystery, for Bornkamm, means the ordained future events revealed by God through the Prophets (1967:824). Brown applies the mystery of Romans 11:25 to the "divine economy of redemption" (1968:50).

The word mystery is not an enigma in Paul's usage; it signifies the revelation of a secret which was once hidden but which now is revealed to those prepared to receive it (cf. Sanday & Headlam, 1945:334; Barth, 1933:412; Batey 1966:222). The divine plan of salvation is called "mystery" not in a sense of riddle or puzzle, but in the sense of direct opposition to mundane human thought. Thus it is the mystery well known by the prophets and Paul about the salvation in the revelation history. For instance, one of the mysteries is God's plan of salvation for the Gentiles here and elsewhere (Rm 16:25; Col 1:26f; cf. 1 Cor 2:1; Eph 3:3ff; 3:9; 6:19), and it is the thing clearly made known to all. It can also be called "paradox" as Barth hints, because it is so much in contrast with the way of human thought (1933:412). Now, by revealing the mystery, "the hope-less reality is broken to the apprehension of hope and to perceiving the goal of hope" (1933:412). The mystery really penetrates into the Christian's eschatological hope, so that Paul wishes that it will not be concealed or ignored by his readers (perhaps in his being aware of the Gentile readers).

The mystery is clearly revealed in at least three facts in this text:

(1) The hardening of Israel;

(2) The salvation of "the fullness of the Gentiles";

(3) The salvation of "all Israel" after that of the Gentiles.

4.7.3 The hardening of Israel

The present time could be characterised as the time of Israel's hardening and the time of the Gentiles' salvation. However, we must recognise two important aspects of their hardening. First, it is to be essentially relative and "**in part**". It is true that **in every age** God has maintained the elect. Even in the present time God keeps the remnant in part as a token of his faithfulness to his covenants (Hendriksen, 1981:378). But on that day to come it would be no more partial but "all Israel".

Second, it is to be **temporary** and will last only "**until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in**". The temporal conjunction αχρις ου must mean here "until", not "while" as in Hebrews 3:13 (Cranfield, 1979:575). Paul's meaning is not that Israel is hardened **during** the time in which the fullness of the Gentiles is coming in, but that the hardening will last **until** the time comes. The sentence denotes rather the inauguration of the end, and the historical happening **at the end of the age** (11:15) (Davies, 1984:133).

Some Christian interpretations differ from the view of the future expectation of this section. For instance, Hendriksen does not see the salvation of Israel as occurring at the end of time, but as a continuing event during the present dispensation. He points this out by giving references from Luke 17:26-37 and 2 Peter 3:3-9, that the moment at which the full number of the Gentiles has been brought to salvation in Christ will occur on the day of Christ's glorious Return; and salvation will be closed at that moment (1981:378). According to him the hardening of a part of Israel and the gathering of the Gentiles occur side by side; the hardening has taken place in every age. But on the other hand, in every age some are saved. Then all Israel, for Hendriksen, is the sum of all the saved, and that has been happening throughout the generations, not at the end of the age.

Robertson also feels that the verse gives no temporal significance but describes the present state of the hardening of Israel. He says that "the phrase declares either that 'partial hardening' has happened to Israel, or that 'part of Israel' has been hardened" (1979:217). According to him, the phrase αχρις ‘ου carries conditions to the ultimate point in time (up to the end of time) without stressing the reversal of prevailing circumstances afterwards. But we will test this view in a later part along with the phrase "και ‘ουτως and "all Israel" in verse 26a (see 4.8.1 and 4.8.3).

4.7.4 The incoming of the fullness of the Gentiles

The word "**coming in**", εισελθηι, is generally taken to mean entering the sacred community of salvation. Sanday and Headlam particularise that it was used "almost technically of entering into the Kingdom or the Divine glory or life" (cf. Mt 7:21; 18:8; Mk 9:43-47)" (1945:335). We can see its clearest illustration from the metaphor of the "olive tree" in Romans 11:17-24.

"**The full number of the Gentiles**": Sanday and Headlam maintain that το πληρωμα denotes the totality of the Gentile world, as το πληρωμα in verse 12 does the totality of the Jewish people (1945:335). Munck maintains that it refers to the salvation of the group in question, with no thought of any specific number to be attained (1967:134). He appeals to other Pauline texts, Romans 15:19; Colossians 1:25; 2 Timoth 4:17, where the word is used for "the full dissemination of the Gospel to the Gentiles". So he convincingly states that it must signify the goal of the totality of the Gentile world (1967:135). Bauer also sees a qualitative fulfilment in terms of the divine demand (1969:678).

On the other hand the verse is commonly seen as a notion of predestination. Thus the fullness of the Gentiles would be considered as the total number of

the elect among the Gentiles in a quantitative sense (Hendriksen, 1981:378). Murray (1965:93f) offers the summarised points of this supposition:

(1) It is impossible to exclude from the expression "to come in" the thought of numbers entering God's kingdom.

(2) The words "hardening in part" gives an intimation of the numerical.

(3) "All Israel" in verse 26 refers to the mass of Israel in contrast to a remnant.

In view of these considerations, as Murray points out, "it would be indefensible to allege that to the expression 'the fullness of the Gentiles' no thought of numerical proportion may be attached" (1965:94). Berkhof also sees a quantitative meaning. He suggests that the best translation would be "becoming full in number" (1966:143ff).

However, it may not be necessary to separate the two opinions, by adopting one and eliminating the other. While it could be referring to a qualitative fulfilment, it more probably involves "their full and completed number" (Sanday & Headlam, 1945:322; Michel, 1966:272; Delling, 1968:305). At least the phrase implies the direction of an incomparably greater number of Gentiles entering into the kingdom of God. But it does not necessarily mean only a numerically final stage. It rather denotes the climax of God's blessing or his salvation of the Gentiles. The fullness would be the Gentile world as a whole, not in the sense of every person in the world but the totality of that which God designated, i.e., the whole group of the elect.

4.8 "AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED" (RM 11:26A)

We now arrive at the most crucial point in our debate. The meaning of πας Ισραηλ has been much disputed throughout the centuries. And yet it is the most important phrase for Christians and for Jews to understand the truth of the salvation history or the truth of Yahweh's work in history. Four main theories of the meaning of "all Israel" may be brought up for our discussion:

(1) All the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, i. e., the church. This view is advocated by Calvin.

(2) All the elect of the nation of Israel, i. e., the remnant, by Bavinck, A. Kuyper sr., Hendriksen, Th. Zahn, H. Hoekstra, Lenski, Robertson. The important point of this view is that it does not see the future hope of Israel.

(3) The whole nation of Israel collectively, by W. Vischer, H.A.W. Meyer E. Stauffer, et cetera.

(4) The ethnic-historical nation Israel as a whole, which is representative of the believing Israelites, by Sanday and Headlam, M.J. Lagrange, Barrett, Munck, Coetzee, Murray, Berkhof, Ridderbos, Käsemann, E.F. Harrison, de Villiers, Davies, et cetera.[8] Before we enter the full account to determine the meaning of "all Israel", we will look at the meaning of the preposition, και ουτω, and examine closely the above suggestions.

4.8.1 The meaning of "and so"

The debate about the meaning of this preposition is greatly sharpened by whether it runs parallel with the preceding verse or whether it flows from the revelation enunciated in the preceding verse.

Those who advocate the second view of the "remnant", like Hendriksen, maintain that the word ουτως does not mean "then" or "after that" (1981:379). It means "so", "in this manner", or "thus". According to Hendriksen the sentence after και ουτως is not to be seen as an addition following two mysteries, but it is rather supplementary to (or explanatory of) the hardening of Israel in the previous verse. Robertson interprets it not as a temporal indication but "and in this manner" or "and in this way". And he views it as being supplementary to the preceding verse, rendering "up to" the point that "the full number of the Gentiles is brought in, and in this manner..."

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8. Berkhof and Ridderbos use the term remnant (namely the same as the second theory), but they also use the term elect as a representative of the nation as a whole placing emphasis on an organic entity, and they see the future of Israel beyond the present.

(1979:222). By these renderings, they do not see any future event of the salvation for Israel. They do not see the sequence of events, the present hardening of the majority of the Jews, the Gentiles' incoming, and the salvation of all Israel, but all these events are present occurrences together, at the same time. Versteeg also states: "Door het woord 'aldus' wordt duidelijk gemaakt, dat Paulus niet denkt aan een bepaald tijdstip waarop gans Israel behouden zal worden, maar aan een bepaalde wijze waarop dat geschieden zal". He argues that nowhere in Romans 11 does Paul bring up such a time period for discussion, but always describes their participation in the present time (1981:9,10). This interpretation is directly linked to the theory of the remnant used for "all Israel", thus we will discuss this matter with the remnant (see ch. 4.8.3).

Sanday and Headlam also render "and so", but their interpretation differs from Hendriksen's (1945:335). They see it as complementary rather than as supplementary. They put the idea that the salvation of "all Israel" will come "by the whole Gentile world coming into the kingdom and thus rousing the Jews to jealousy" (cf. v 11f). They refuse the view of making the phrase ‘ουτω...σωθησεται coordinate with the sentence πωρωσις...γεγονεν and subordinate to ‘οτι. Berkhof also asserts that there is no reason to exclude the possibility that this "and so" is a future event (1966:145).

The phrase therefore lies in the succession of time conditioning the emergence of the fact, in the sense of "so then" (Meyer, 1874:233). Or it can be rendered as "and accordingly" which means "continuing the thought of what precedes or drawing out its implications" (cf. Murray, 1965:96). Cranfield holds the meaning even that "when these preconditions have been fulfilled, all Israel will be saved" (1979:574).

Examining the whole context of these chapters, we see that Paul has presented the sorrowful situation of the present rejection, and that he has taught a hope for his nation which had not been realised at the time of Paul. Returning to

verse 25, he concludes that the sorrowful situation will last "until" the time. Thus ‘ουτως in the present verse must be seen in the correlation with "until" in verse 25 because it is favoured by the whole context of his argument. Therefore it is required to be the temporal conjunction as NEB renders "when that has happened", and JB does "then after this".

With the above presuppositions we will consider the meaning of "all Israel will be saved". First, we will examine the suggestions which we may not agree with, then we will work towards what we think will be the best interpretation.

4.8.2 The first theory: The spiritual Israel, the church

At first we must reject the interpretation that πας Ισραηλ means the universal church, the believers out of Israel and out of the gentile nations. Calvin states in his **Commentary on Romans:**

> And so all Israel, et cetera. Many understand this of the Jewish people....but I extend the word Israel to all the people of God, according to this meaning, When the Gentiles shall come in, the Jews also shall return from their defection to the obedience of faith; and thus shall be completed the salvation of the whole Israel of God, which must be gathered from both; and yet in such a way that the Jews shall obtain the first place, being, as it were, the first-born in God's family..... The same manner of speaking we find in Gal. 6:16. The Israel of God is what he calls the church, gathered alike from Jews and Gentiles; and he sets the people, thus collected from their dispersion, in opposition to the carnal children of Abraham, who had departed from his faith (1844:330).

Yes, he is correct when he appeals to the idea of the people of God, namely the church, which contains the elect from/among Jews and Gentiles. The two form the one body, the people of God (Rm 10:12,13; Gl 3:28; Eph 2:14). It is, however, wrong that he does not make a distinction between the nation of Israel and the universal people of God. The idea of the universal church is scriptural and Pauline. But it is a different matter to prove that the term "all Israel" has that meaning, especially in this particular context. For his argument of "Israel" as the church he only takes Galatians 6:16 as a proof text which is very vulnerable when used to support such a significant issue (cf. Coetzee, 1965:206f; Hendriksen, 1968:37).

4.8.2.1 Evidence from Galatians 6:16

Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, και the Israel of God.

What does "Israel of God" mean? If this passage does use the term "Israel of God" for the church, it is the only passage that does so in the entire New Testament.

Και ὅσοι τῳ κανονι τουτῳ στοιχησουσιν (v 16): Κανων is apparently the principle just laid down about the "new creation" in contrast to those who maintain the continuing validity of circumcision and similar legal requirements. Upon those who have thus apprehended the grace of God and have been delivered from the law and its religious regulations, Paul breathes a benediction of peace and mercy. The "peace" in the benediction may be understood here in the general sense of the eschatological salvation (Ridderbos, 1953:227). "Mercy" (ελεος, equivalent to the Old Testament "hsd") is that which God has promised his people in his covenant and which Israel therefore expects from God (1953:227). The benediction speaks of the great gift of salvation promised by God and granted as the inheritance promised to the seed of Abraham (cf. 3:18,29; 5:21). It is right to give such a blessing "to all who walk by this rule", who belong to the spiritual seed of Abraham. Then, why does Paul add the phrase "και upon the Israel of God"? Is it because he wants to emphasise the fact that they who are Abraham's heirs are to be renamed the new Israel? Or, because he is aware of the Israelites, who walk alongside of the Gentile believers in Christ, and who naturally inherit the promises to Abraham? If it is the first case, it is the only reference in the New Testament make to "Israel" as the church. But we must see it in the whole context of Galatians and even in the light of the whole body of Paul's letters.

The meaning of "Kai"

The conjunction και can be rendered: and, and so, also, likewise, even, nevertheless, and yet, but, et cetera. A reader must, therefore, take into

consideration the specific context. Here in Galatians 6:16, this conjunction is rendered "and" by KJV, ARV, and NEB, which may indicate a bridge between two different words; and "even to" by RSV and NIV, which indicates one is supplementary to the other. Seeing the context, the following possibilities can be suggested (see Coetzee, 1965:218f).

(1) It can be that και coordinates two separate entities: "all who follow this rule", i.e., the church, and "the Israel of God", i.e., the empirical-national people of Israel. However, we can not agree with this version because Paul never takes the empirical sense of Israel as God's people. He refutes their claim as the natural descendants of Abraham, and refuses them the fact of being the true people of God.

(2) It can be considered that "all who..." are the Gentile Christians and "the Israel of God" is to be the Christians out of Israel. But the first part of the interpretation is improbable with the word και ὅσοι which obviously indicates all believers, not just the Gentiles.

(3) Και can be taken as an "expansive" conjunction by which the sentence starts with a part and expands to the whole. In other words, "all who..." could be the Christian community of Galatia, and "Israel of..." be the whole church, all believers. This opinion is mainly formed by following the typical form of the Jewish benediction. But it is to be rejected because for the first group ὅσοι can not be limited to a part; and the second group is rather to be a part of all the believers.

(4) Και can be strongly argued to mean "that is" or "namely". In this position, "all who.." could be the same people as "Israel of..", thus Israel here means the church (Hendriksen, 1968:33f). But it is doubtful: Why did Paul feel that it was necessary to repeat mentioning the same group by a different name? Is there any strong reason for Paul to introduce the new name, "Israel", to the same group? If so, why did he not give any indication

for that reason in the other part of the book and even in any other letters? If he felt that it was necessary to repeat mentioning the same group, why does he use επι in front of both which may strongly indicate that they are different entries? Such questions lead us to consider another possible interpretation.

(5) Not being satisfied with all the other suggestions, we are forced to consider the last and the most probable suggestion. It is that και means "also", as an introduction to the more specific explanation of "ὁσοι..." (Coetzee, 1965:219). Thus we may read 'peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, **yes also** to the Israel of God' - i.e., 'also they are not excluded' (1965:219). In favour of this account we may take the particular construction of the sentence: ειρηνη επι αυτους και ελεος. After Paul issued his benediction he wanted to give another blessing in addition to ειρηνη επι αυτους, and the additional word και ελεος takes all the concern in the preceding words. In the same manner Paul wanted to express his additional concern about Israel which would be qualified in all the preceding words. After denouncing the Jews, he might think it necessary to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the Gentile Christians as if he eliminated any importance attached to the place of Israel. Thus, after he has dealt with Jewish justification by law, and condemned their pride in the law, Paul is making sure that the Gentile Christians know that the believing Israelites must not be excluded from that benediction. The structure of the sentence, placing και before ελεος, possibly suggests this to have been an appended second after-thought. It may be suggested as follows: In view of the apostle's previous strong anti-Judaistic expressions, he feels impelled, by the insertion of και, to emphasise this expression of his true attitude towards his people (cf. Coetzee, 1965:219).

As we have seen earlier (ch. 3), Israel is always Israel, the historical-ethnic nation, the covenanted and those chosen by God's great mercy, beside this text. She had the promises since the patriarchs and still keeps it. Although the church is the true people of God, and can take the (spiritual) concept of Abraham's seed, it has never been expressed as Israel, and it has never

taken Israel's position as the covenanted people. Then, how can Paul use this term to have an entirely new meaning without any further explanation? (cf. Bruce, 1982:274ff).

4.8.2.2 The relationship of Galatians 6:16 to Romans 11:26a

The scholars who identify Israel as the church tend to look at Romans 11:26a in the light of Galatians 6:16. They apply the narrowed interpretation of Galatians for understanding Romans 9-11. It is not deniable that both books deal with the same problem of the Jewish law and the same theme, namely, justification by faith. However, we must recognise that there are remarkable differences from one another, in content, in tone, and in issue. Firstly Paul, the founder of the church, personally knows the community of Galatia very well, and he might be informed about the problem of the law people in every detail, even person by person, and word by word. But he had never been to Rome. He might not know the church in every detail. His information about the problems in the Roman community must be secondhand. Thus when he dealt with the problems of the Roman community, he stated them in a general sense, and for the purpose of **evangelism** (cf. Coetzee, 1965:222). He presents his argument in a very balanced way, namely that salvation comes to you only by faith, but there is hope for Israel. In the other case with Galatians, he sharply goes into cutting off the evil theory. He might not feel that the balanced way of presentation is necessary for his intimate fellows. Therefore, it is right to see the specific statement in the light of the general instead of the general in the light of the specific. In Galatians Paul does not deal with the relationship of the church and Israel, and then suddenly he states the final word of "Israel". We had better see them in the light of Romans, which offers general and lengthy ideas about the relationship of the nation Israel to the messianic people of God. Romans testifies that God did not reject Israel (11:1f), that Israel still holds the privilege of being the covenanted people (9:1-4), and that not every individual Israelite belongs to Israel, but only the elect (9:5ff).

Thus we may conclude our debate on Galatians 6:16 with the following understanding in the light of Romans 9-11:

(1) When Paul says "Israel", it is Israel, not the church;

(2) "The Israel of God" here is the believing Israelites who walk in the principle of the new creation and who obtain the promise to the patriarch.

In conclusion there should be no direct connection of Romans 11:26a to Galatians 6:16, as Murray (1965:96f, fn 51) and others suggest. According to Murray, there is no discussion of such a contrast between Israel and the Gentiles through the whole book of Galatians, while in the present passage of Romans there appears a sustained contrast between Israel and the Gentiles. Even Hendriksen, after having tried to prove Israel as the church in Galatians 6:16, admits that Galatians 6:16 cannot be used to interpret Israel in Romans 11:26a as the church (1968:46f). Besides the argument of Galatians 6:16, Paul never conveys the idea of the church when he uses the term Israel in Romans 9-11. Thus, the theory that "all Israel" means the church can not be sustained.

4.8.3 The second theory: The remnant

The second suggested interpretation, i. e., that "All Israel" refers to the total number of the elect (remnant) of Jews, is not tenable either. Although the elect can be called "the true Israel", it is not right to apply it to this particular verse.

First, the meaning of "Israel" cannot be altered within a narrow context into another meaning. In the immediately preceding verse "Israel" meant ethnic Israel, implying the state of the hardening of her majority rather than implying the faith of the belief of the remnant. If verse 25 says "the ethnic Israel" and there is no obvious evidence of shifting it unto another meaning within the narrowed context, such a dramatic changed meaning can hardly be ac-

cepted. Even more, it is ironic that while those who advocate this theory tend to make the two verses a parallel (or supplementary), yet they extract different meanings out of the same word.

Secondly, their taking two verses (v 25a and v 26a) as a parallel can hardly be accepted. Murray rightly replies to this matter:

> And since verse 26 is so closely related to verse 25, the assurance that "all Israel shall be saved" is simply another way of stating what is expressly called "this mystery" in verse 25 or, at least, a way of drawing out its implications.... Verse 26 is in close sequence with verse 25. The main thesis of verse 25 is that the hardening of Israel is to terminate and that Israel is to be restored (1965:97).

Thirdly, the theory seriously fails to explain the use of the word "mystery" in verse 25. If the "mystery" were limited to the present hardening situation, and the salvation of the Gentiles, it would not have been a real "mystery" which Paul wanted to reveal, and to emphasise "not to be ignored". Thus "pas Israyl" forecasts the re-union of the "remnant" and "the rest" (Dinter, 1980:53).

Finally, the most critical failure of this theory comes from a misunderstanding of the concept of "remnant". The remnant is implicitly "not all of Israel", but only part of her, a part which bears the promise to Israel into the future. It is itself the chosen people, it is a narrower inner Israel, namely the true Israel at the present time, but it cannot be said to be the nation itself (cf. Nygren, 1978:393). Coetzee rightly states:

> Hierdie λειμμα, oorblyfsel, is vir Paulus egter nie gelykstaande aan Israel as volk nie. Die oorblyfsel is nie die verengde geheel van die volk nie, maar net 'n εκλογη, 'n uitverkore groep van die hede - vgl. 11:7.... Die εκλογη of λειμμα is egter well verteenwoordigend van die hele volk, die kern van Israel. Daarom dien die bestaan van die εκλογη in die hede as bewys dat God nie die volk verstoot het nie. Die εκλογη is geen groepie wat onttrek is aan die volk nie, maar as kern is hulle die bewys, die Goddelike borg, dat die volk behoue sal bly as godsvolk (1965:176f).

The idea of the remnant does not place emphasis on salvation of the small portion of individuals, but it seriously concerns the revival of the nation as a whole. When Ezekiel cries out after he was informed the death of Pelatiah,

"Ah, sovereign Lord! Will you completely destroy the remnant of Israel?", he is worried about the existence of the nation, rather than Pelatiah himself. Through the history of the Old Testament, whenever the nation was threatened by the practice of false religion and by invaders, the remnant played an important role in keeping the nation Israel as God's chosen people.

We must keep in mind the concept of the remnant with reference to the specific historical situation of the present time and a futuristic hope. In the Old Testament the word is always linked with the prospect of imminent disaster (Schrenk, 1967:212) (also see Part III, 2.5.1). The original remnant passage of Isaiah 10:20-23 (quoted in Romans 9:27-28) must also be seen in the light of historical circumstances (Hasel pinpoints it well in 1974:319). According to Hasel, Isaiah's remnant message is implied by the name and the mission of Shear-Yashub in 7:3-9, where the clear historical picture is described as the meeting of Isaiah and the king Ahaz during the war with the Assyrians (1974:288-89; cf. Dinter, 1980:174ff). Isaiah's message with his son Shear-yashub, which implies that "the remnant will return" (10:21), was given as a hope for the king and the people in the dark period of Israel, during the exile. The remnant, for Isaiah, means the message of salvation in the difficult situation, as well as an inevitable judgment and punishment (Dinter, 1980:171). It is the message of his mercy that lies behind his judgment. The remnant is a potential force of the nation of Israel for survival. It has a mission to keep the nation, as covenanted and chosen, during any difficult period. Thus it appears only at such a time. The remnant can be identified as the true Israel at a certain time period, but not in the general concept.

Gross summarises the concept of remnant, after having examined recent studies: (1) When the people as a whole are subject to a threat only a **remnant** of them will escape (a partial concept of the remnant); (2) but the fact that a remnant **does survive and does remain** is full of promise for the future and extends beyond the particular downfall (1970:742).

The judgement of God after all never brings absolute and unmitigated punishment upon Israel, his chosen nation. The remnant, a small chosen part of the people must survive the threatened condemnation and punishment of God in order to become the new bearers of the promises. The remnant, then, represents a link between the community threatened with condemnation and punishment on the one hand, and that awaiting the fulfilment of the promises on the other (Gross, 1970:743). Thus the function of the remnant is to ensure the survival of the nation at the present time (Gn 7:23; 45:7; 1 Ki 19:18; Is 1:8f; 8:16-18) and to signify a future entity (Is 7:10ff; Ezk 11:13ff). It is especially the bearer of the promises of salvation, the hope of the nation. The remnant is not the final one. The salvation of Israel is not satisfied just with the remnant. But the remnant means the future promise of the restoration of the nation. It is the seed which will bear the harvest after enduring the winter. It is the root which sustains the potential power for the tree to survive. It is not the tree itself, but a guarantee of the tree for the future (Nygren, 1978:393). Thus, the remnant is the foundation and the guarantee for a new future in which all Israel will be saved (Berkhof, 1966:143).

The case of Paul's usage of the term must be seen in the same way. Paul lived, preached, and wrote in a period of crisis in which the meaning of Israel had been challenged by the incidents of the crucifixion and of the persecution of the church. In Paul's passages dealing with the remnant the message is not given to show a limited salvation only to the remnant. Paul's message truly is: The salvation is limited to the remnant at the present time while others are stumbling; but keeping the remnant at the present time means that God did not reject his people. And then Paul looks forward to the future of Israel as a whole.

These final words of "the salvation of all Israel" were prepared for in 11:11-24. In verses 11-24 it is shown that the remnant is not the final goal (Schrenk, 1967:211). In verse 12 Paul speaks about the present situation of their (Israel's) transgression and loss, but it will be "their fullness". In verse 25

the hardening is shown to be partial, but it will be "all Israel". Paul suffers agony at their hardening, but he looks for their re-adoption (or their acceptance) and life from death (v 15) (cf. Vannoy, 1986:14). The "hardening" and the remnant are temporally determined.

Paul presents the time sequence from Israel's hardening, the Gentiles' incoming, and then Israel's salvation. For Paul the salvation of the Gentiles is intended by God to be the means of provoking Israel to jealousy and bringing Israel back to Himself (vs 11,12); their transgression means riches for the Gentiles, then the riches of the Gentile will bring the fullness of Israel. The idea of sequence is further shown in the metaphor of the olive tree: The natural branches have been cut off and wild branches grafted in, but Paul envisions a time when the natural branches will again be grafted onto their own olive tree (Vannoy, 1986:14). This is the case in verse 25 and 26 alike: The hardening of the part of Israel, the Gentiles' incoming, and then "all Israel". Thus, Paul remarkably proceeds to his argument of the salvation of Israel, placing two contradictory ideas one after another: The present for the remnant, but the future for the fullness; the present for hardening, but the future for salvation. Or such as, the loss of Israel for the incoming of the Gentiles; the Gentiles' incoming for the fullness of Israel. Therefore, the suggestion "only the remnant will be saved" is not God's last word, and the theory that no future of Israel's massive salvation is expected is not God's final purpose (cf. Berkhof, 1966:142). Taking action by Him for the final salvation of Israel is foreseen by the prophets (esp. Ezk 37:1-14; Zch 14:1-21), and is known by Paul here.

4.8.4 The third theory: The totality of the people

We reject the other side of the extreme view, a national-universalistic interpretation, or an empirical-national sense of Israel, which calls πας Ισραηλ as all members of Israel and as the Jewish people collectively, and which also takes into account seriously the empirical national movement. They understand

that it is each Israelite, man to man. Thus "all Israel" means for them a radical universal redemption of the national Israel. With this interpretation, they suddenly make Paul return to the pure Rabbinic-Judaizer's standpoint.

It is obvious that the process of Paul's statement from the preceding verse to verse 26 denotes a great turning of the situation of Israel from hardening to receiving the Gospel, from wrath to mercy, and from part to the mass. So we may call it "**the restoration of Israel**". It therefore obliges us at least to consider that the words "all Israel" refer to the mass, the people as a whole, or the nation of Israel as a whole in accordance with the pattern followed throughout the chapter (Murray, 1965:98). Paul is not, however, reflecting on the question of the relative proportion of the saved Jews in the final accounting of God's judgment (1965:98). And it may not imply every individual Israelite. In respect of Paul's argument we must note his repetition of the point that "not all Israelites are the true Israel", but the elect (we will continue our discussion of this theory in the immediately following sub-chapter).

4.8.5 The final suggestion: The nation of Israel as a whole

After opposing some theories, we conclude that πας Ισραηλ stands for the historical-ethnic nation of Israel as a whole, contrary to the Church as the spiritual Israel, to the remnant of Israel, and to all the members of Israel. Now we may define it in the real sense of "all Israel" instead of in the numerical sense.

In the first place πας Ισραηλ must be distinguished from "all Israelites". The word "Israel" does not indicate a numerical count of individuals, but **an organic whole.** It is evident from the Old Testament usage of "all Israel" or "all the nation". It always concerns the organic whole and not the full number of individuals. Versteeg states:

> De uitdrukking 'gans Israel' heeft een duidelijk oudtestamentische achtergrond. Wanneer in het Oude Testament sprake is van 'gans Israel' gaat het niet om een optelsom van allen uit Israel als individuele leden van het volk, maar om het volk Israel als **totaliteit** (vlg. b.b. 1 Sam

10:23-25; 1 Kon 12:1; 2 Kon 12:1). Uit teksten als Deut 31:11, 2 Sam 6:5,15, blijkt dat de uitdrukking 'gans Israel' vooral ook gebruikt wordt ter aanduiding van het volk Israel, zoals het op de cultische hoogtijdagen samenkomt tot de dienst van de HERE (1981:11; cf. Coetzee, 1965:207f).

In the New Testament, Acts 13:24 reads "John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel". It is difficult to believe that "all..." meant the complete number of the people (Coetzee, 1965:208).

In the second place, we must be careful not to emphasise the πας-aspect in the matter of the salvation of Israel, we must rather give our attention to the Ισραηλ-aspect. Verses 26b and 27 speak about the redemption of Jacob, who represents the nation of Israel as an ethnic unity. In verses 30 and 31, Paul uses "they" (Israel) in distinction from "you" (Gentiles), without being concerned about the numerical inclusiveness. Verse 32 says, "For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all ", Gentiles as well as Israel; and "them all" (τους παντας, lit, 'the all' or 'every one') can not be imagined as a reference to a numerical completion of the redemption of all mankind (cf. Coetzee, 1965:208).

In the third place, the context clearly teaches that πας Ισραηλ does not include unbelieving Israelites. Paul has expressed such sorrow for his unbelieving kinsmen. He stresses their failure to accept the Saviour. Because of their hardening, salvation has departed from them and has passed on to the Gentiles. Then if it is truly said that salvation will turn back to Israel, it means that a powerful conversion will come about. We don't know much about the way of conversion and the numbers whether it will be virtually every Israelite or a massive number of Israel at the minimum. This believing group will, however, be called "all Israel". The unbelievers, if any, will be excluded from "Israel". Paul's doctrine, namely faith in Christ only, is firmly established through the book of Romans. A true Israelite is not a person who belongs to the nation physically or one who is able to trace his ancestry to Abraham, but one who obtains the promise by faith in Christ. Not all the descendants of Abraham are truly Israelites (1 Cor 10:18; Jn 5:41-44). They

are God's people only on the grounds of his loving their patriarchs to whom God made a covenant (9:4; 11:16). Thus the whole argument must focus on the covenant and the question, "who participate in the covenantal promises?" Coetzee says:

> Onder πας Israel wat gered word, verstaan Paulus dus die volk Israel in sy hoedanigheid as **die volk van die verbond!** Hierin lê die sleutel vir die regte verstaan van πας Ισραηλ! Want in Romeine 9:6 e.v. het Paulus uitdruklik beskryf hoedanig die Israel van die verbond is (1965:209).

There is an obvious resemblance between 11:26-29 and 9:4-13:

In 11:28-29 the reference of πας Ισραηλ 'Israel' is to those (1) with whom the covenant was made (vs 27,28); (2) whom God elected (v 28); (3) to whom God's promise was given; (4) whom God called (v 29).

In 9:4-13 the reference of "true Israel", 'Israel' is to those (1) of the covenant (vs 4,5,6); (2) who are said to be God's elect (v 11); (3) to whom the promises of the covenant were given (v 4); (4) who deserved God's calling according to his free-will (v 11). Thus "Israel" means the one, within the physical Israel, who can claim the covenantal promises by faith in Christ.

On the other hand, the expression, "all Israel", must not be understood as a part of true believers, or a remnant, but the nation of Israel as a whole. Sanday and Headlam render it thus:

> So the words of St. Paul mean simply this. The people of Israel as a nation, and no longer απο μερους, shall be united with the Christian Church. They do not mean that every Israelite shall finally be saved. Of final salvation St. Paul is not now thinking nor of God's dealings with individuals, nor does he ask about those who are already dead, or who will die before this salvation of Israel is attained. He is simply considering God's dealing with the nation as a whole (1945:335).

The determination of the salvation of Israel as a whole was planted in the Abrahamic covenant by God Himself. The whole history of the Old Testament has proved it, and the prophets continually spoke about it. Now Paul is confirming it again at the present and for the future. The time of the future will come when the full number of the Gentiles is brought in (Murray, 1965:98).

Finally we have to see the present verse together with verse 12 , where the present partial salvation anticipates the "fullness", i.e., the whole Israel. The verse has the same implication to "the fullness" of the Gentiles' salvation. As we have already said in the exposition of verse 12, "the fullness" implies not only quality, but also quantity. Considering all those factors together, we may conclude that "pas" as "**the full number of measure**" is determined by God (Ridderbos, 1959:264). It differs from the view of "the remnant" and from that of "the numerical totality". Only the elect, who become Christians as a result of the preaching of the Gospel, will be called "Israel", hence they will represent the people or the nation of Israel as a whole. The "all Israel" must be satisfied in both ways: **quantitatively and qualitatively** (cf. de Villiers, 1982:217).

In summary, πας Ισραηλ in 11:26a must be explained in the light of the whole of Scripture, especially Romans 9-11. As far as we have researched throughout the Scriptures, "Israel" is the historical-ethnic nation of Israel. "Israel" in the context of the book of Romans is the one that has the covenant and the one that God has chosen. "All Israel" means the covenantal nation as a whole; the whole elect out of Israel; the entire body of believing Israelites. It is an organic nation instead of individuals. The term "all Israel" is not to be understood as individuals or people collectively, nor as the remnant partially.

4.9 PAUL'S CONFIRMATION FROM SCRIPTURE (RM 11:26B-27)

Verses 26b and 27 are logically connected to verse 26a. The words "as it is written" indicate that the declaration concerning the future of Israel in verse 26a is confirmed by the Scripture of the Old Testament. The quotation from the Old Testament does not come from one single passage, but from several passages, as in a skilful symposium. It is believed to be a quotation from Isaiah 59:20,21; 27:9, with reminders from Jeremiah 31:31-34 (cf. Hendriksen, 1981:383).

Stendahl and Davies point out the fact that in the original MT text there is no strong indication of the Redeemer as Christ (Stendahl, 1976:4; Davies 1984:140f). In the MT, Isaiah 59:20 refers more probably to God Himself, giving a promise that He will come as redeemer for Zion (cf. Cranfield, 1979:578). The reference in Romans 11:27, adopted from Isaiah 59:21, must be the eternal covenant between Yahweh and Israel. This is to be achieved by God's initiative through the forgiveness of sin. Even though that achievement must come through the blood of Jesus Christ, the reference denotes the general thought of what God will do, not the specific redemptive idea of Jesus Christ. This argument can be supported by the fact that Paul's discourse in Romans 9-11 is very "theo-centric", rather than Christo-centric. **God's faithfulness to his covenant with Israel** lies at the centre of the discourse in these chapters. If we follow this idea, we may suggest that the present verses neither describe the specific activity of the Messiah at the moment of parousia as some dispensationalist claims (Harrison, 1976:124; Sauer, 1954:157f), nor the past and present event of Christ by his first coming as Hendrikson maintains (1981:380,382), but rather the promise of the restoration of Israel in a general sense, which God will accomplish.

In verse 27, quoting a part of Isaiah 59:21, ‘ουτη anticipates the later part of the verse, suggesting the content of the covenant (Cranfield, 1979:576f). ‘Οταν introduces the single clause indicating the content of the covenant. Paul reveals freedom to combine quotations out of different places of Scripture with a slight alteration again (later part of v 27 from Is 27:9). By doing so, he leads his argument into his view that the salvation of Israel is based on God's gracious covenant, especially the new covenant, which is to be established with Israel, and which consists in his gracious forgiveness of their sins (cf. Jr 33:24). Even though Paul adopts the word from Isaianic passages, it is obvious that Paul had in mind the new covenant of Jeremiah (Dodd, 1959:182; Kasemann, 1974:38; Bruce, 1963:222; Murray, 1965:98f). At any rate, it is a covenant that guarantees Israel's complete forgiveness; and this

can be none other than the new covenant (McComiskey, 1985:161). The new covenant had been in force (esp. with the Gentiles) when Christ introduced it by his blood, but one day Israel will be admitted to that covenant. It will be ratified with the people, and they will enjoy the blessings of complete forgiveness and obedience (1985:161). It is very natural for Paul and his readers to see God's forgiveness and deliverance - that is signified by σωθησεται here - in the covenant perspective. The covenant which Israel holds and which is the only hope for her, will dash the claim on God and the presumption to put Him under such an obligation. After Paul has set out his whole argument concerning Israel, he is verifying it by the final words of the covenant. **What makes the nation of Israel qualified for the object of salvation is that God Himself had made the covenants with her fathers.** This fact was proved by our studies in the Old Testament, and also appears in the study of the New Testament.

Verse 32 sums up what has been said in the immediately preceding comparison between the Gentiles and Jews, and in the whole of chapters 9-11. God has bound all to disobedience so that He may have mercy on them all. This is the way to the salvation opened by God to all, Jews and Gentiles alike. Paul avoids any and sectarianism and superiority. He ventures a comprehensive prophecy in respect to all the nations and all Israel together (11:31f). He proves his own missionary activity for the world (15:14-19; cf. v 8-13). His hope is the salvation of the whole Israel and the whole world.

Deliberately, attention is first focused on God's free action. God's purpose with Israel is determined only by his own free will and his love for his people (cf. Ridderbos, 1959:227-31). In this way, if an argumentative theologian thinks that he can be absolutely sure of God by his theology, his sense of freedom will crush the freedom of God (Schrenk, 1967:211). He takes counsel from no man. His thoughts and ways are entirely different from man's. After everything has been finished, man can only praise Him:

Oh! The depth of the riches, the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!... (11:33).

5 THE NEW COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

As we saw in Part II, the new covenant was given to "the house of Israel" and "the house of Judah" in the context of the restoration of Israel which starts with the returning of the people from the exile. However, the new covenant in the New Testament seems to be effective to whoever believes in Christ regardless of any ethnic group, and it may lead one to claim that the new covenant was given to the church. In this section we will examine the new covenant passages of the New Testament in order to define in what sense the new covenant is spoken about and in what sense the Gentile believers enjoy the blessing of it.

5.1 LUKE 22:20 (CF. MK 14:24; MT 26:28)

The phrase "the new covenant" in Luke clearly applies to Jeremiah 31:31, but the mention of blood cannot be derived directly from that source.[9] The phrase "my blood of the covenant" rather alludes to Exodus 24:8. In taking the sacrificial blood of the burnt offerings and peace offerings of Exodus 24, Jesus is giving expression to the typology of his own blood soon to be shed in the final sacrifice on the cross. It fits in with the idea of the new covenant that it announced, cancelling the old system of sacrifice. The relevance of the allusion of the text is that the blood of the old covenant was the sign and seal of a covenant between God and his people Israel, so now, by the blood of Jesus, the era of the new covenant is brought about. The blood of sacrifices verified the covenant relationship between God and the people in Old Testament times, after they had been redeemed from Egypt under Moses; now it is to

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[9] Luke 22:19b-20 is relegated to the margin by RSV and NEB, as a later addition to the text. Some recent studies have shown that it is most probably original (see Jeremias, 1966:138-59).

consist of those who through the sacrificial death of Jesus are brought into a new and true covenant relationship with God.

Thus the text of Luke clearly shows the inauguration of the new covenant in the soteriological sense.

5.2 HEBREWS 8:1-10:18

The theme of the covenant plays a significant role in Hebrews. The writer introduces the term into his discussion at 7:22, asserting that Jesus is "the guarantee of a better covenant". A further reference to the "better covenant" in 8:6 precedes the full citation of Jeremiah 31:31-34. The author details a comparison of the provisions and effects of "the new" with "the first", by which he obviously refers to the Mosaic covenant (cf. 8:4-6; 8:15-22). The author maintains in this part that it is "to expose for the recipients of the soteriological significance of the Christ-event by describing Christ's high-priestly activity" (Nakagawa, 1958:218). Considering this fact, we must remember that the writer views the covenant "largely in terms of its provisions for worship" (Peterson, 1978:75). Thus, we must be careful not to put all elements of the new covenant away as if this passage clarified all things at once. Also the author of the Epistle does not look for all the meanings of the Mosaic covenant (esp. the election of Israel), but limits it to the system of redemption.

The text of Hebrews deals with the inadequacy of the old system of sacrifice under the Mosaic covenant (7:19,25; 9:9; 10:2). The efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is compared with the old system (10:12-22). The shedding of Christ's blood is emphasised as being necessary for the forgiveness of sins and as being in connection with the new covenant (9:26,28; 10:29; 12:24; 13:20). Christ's priestly fulfilment is described in the picture of the Day of Atonement (9:11-14). In contrast with that of earthly high priests, Christ's ministry λειτουργία is in the heavenly sanctuary (8:6). Λειτουργία is used as a

technical term to express the priestly cult. The author takes up the word "with this background in order to describe Christ's high-priestly activity" (Nakagawa, 1955:219). It alludes to Zechariah's vision of Joshua's garment who stood in the heavenly court as a wonder and a sign of the coming Messiah.

The theme of chapter 9 is also sacrifice. By means of Christ's self-sacrifice, the new covenant is instituted and guaranteed as effective for ever. By his blood, the believers can enter the new relationship which was promised in Jeremiah. Thus, the author expresses it in terms of Christ's mediation of the New Testament (Nakagawa, 1955:228). In this sense the author of the Epistle could be able to claim that He is the mediator and guarantee of the new covenant (8:6; 7:22; 9:15; 12:24). Now, by his sacrificial death, the "days" of which Jeremiah spoke becomes a reality.

Still looking for the future

The author of Hebrews does not say at this moment that the matter of the new covenant has now been finished. He rather urges to "hold unswervingly to the hope" which God promised (10:23), otherwise a fearful judgment is expected (10:27). If it was finished by Christ's death, why is the expectation of judgment announced again?

In the section where the heavenly tabernacle is stressed (esp. 9:23ff), Bruce sees the heavenly court as the spiritual temple according to Stephen's preaching in Acts 7:48 which is quoted from Isaiah 66:1f (1964:199f). Peterson rightly sees that the writer indicates Christ's ascension and approaching the presence of God as pictured in Daniel 7:13ff (1982:143). The author's intention is not to say in 9:24 that "the heavenly sanctuary" is the promised land which the promised people are to return to and to live in forever. But, the writer rather encourages man to have the hope of Christ's coming again to bring the restoration as the final fulfilment.

In conclusion, after we have examined New Testament passages, we have a firm idea that the era of the new covenant has been inaugurated by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, and the promise of forgiveness is effected to the believers in Christ. But the new covenant passages of the New Testament are silent beyond the soteriological aspect. The important elements, such as the renewal of heart, keeping the law, knowing God, young and old are not mentioned. Furthermore, the whole context of the restoration in which the new covenant was given is not brought up in those passages. We may say that the gathering into the new kingdom, in a sense, has been started; but it is still in progress and is not finished yet. The true relationship between God and believers in Christ has been established, but the believers are yet not living in the permanent place. The New Testament speculates much more on things yet to come.

The passages of Hebrews speak of Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant. The idea is the same as that of the true "offspring" in Galatians 3:16 (see ch. 4.4.2). "Through the offspring" of Abraham the nations obtain Abraham's blessing, in the same manner "through Him" the Gentiles obtain the blessing of the new covenant. Thus the blessing of the nations does not mean to annihilate the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people.

6 CONCLUSION

In the New Testament, we have seen the nation of Israel qualified as being the covenanted people. The name "Israel" is not used other than for the ethnic nation Israel. "Israel" is distinguished from "the Jews": The former holds its capacity of the covenant privilege, while the latter implies the empirical sense of their belonging to the state or the race. "The Jews" is mostly used in a negative sense in the Gospel of John and the Epistles, being accused of pride in having the law which can not lead them to salvation. "Israel" is

also distinguished from "the church" in the New Testament: The former points to the narrow line of the covenanted people while the latter retains a wide sense of the people of God. The Messianic "people of God" consists of the natural seed of Abraham, true believing Israelites, and the spiritualized offspring of Abraham from the nations. The term "Israel" is never identified as "the church" except in one very doubtful passage in Galatians 6:16.

In the preaching of the Gospel, we are also able to distinguish between the particularity (for Israel) and universality (for the nations). It is clearly shown in the earlier part of the Gospel of Luke and also through the Gospels and Acts. Jesus' missionary work also mentions "Israel" first, and then the nations (Mt 10:5f; 15:24; Lk 19:10; cf Rm 1:16). The Gospel was to be spread from Jerusalem via Samaria to the end of the world. Although there was a serious turning point to the Gentiles from Israel because of her hardening, the Gospel was still preached to Israel. Romans 15 indicates the movement of the Gospel from Israel to the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles to Israel.

Paul's argument in Romans 9-11 most strongly shows the sequence of the salvation, from Israel to the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles to Israel. Paul envisages the hope of the future for Israel while he suffers agony because of the hardening of his kinsmen in his time. He even says that his purpose in preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles is to evoke his kinsmen's jealousy so that they will come to salvation (Rm 11:14). We may sum up Paul's argument in these chapters as follows:

1) Israel still remains God's covenanted people (9:1-4).

2) The salvation has been directed to the Gentiles because of the hardening of the people (9:19-10:21).

3) God has not rejected Israel. The remnant is evidence of the fact (9:1ff).

4) The hardening of the people in the present time is not final. God will use the Gentiles to evoke his people's jealousy to come to salvation. Israel continues to be central to his redemptive plan (11:17-21).

5) Gentile believers must remember that they have been grafted onto the family of God and that there is no reason to boast against the natural branches of Israel (11:17-24).

6) The eventual outcome of the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles is that "all Israel will be saved" (11:25f).

7) Believing Gentiles and Jews are recipients of the mercy of God (11:28-32).

The "all Israel" is the historical-ethnic nation of Israel as an organic whole. Israel keeps her capacity of the covenant. The new covenant passages of Hebrews do not annihilate it. The Gentile believers are spiritualized to become the offspring of Abraham. They share the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant and the new covenant through the true offspring of Christ, who is the mediator of the covenants. These facts, however, does not take away the covenantal blessings from the natural offspring of Abraham. Thus we must refuse the idea that the church has now replaced Israel.

Paul's expectation is not a Gentile movement, but the Christian movement including the Gentiles and Israel (Stendahl, 1976:132). Although there is a continuity between Israel of the Old Testament and the church of the New Testament, and both share the same meaning of "God's people", Israel must be distinguished from the church. The church retains both the true Israel and the Gentile believers. Thus, the church cannot be identical with Israel. Within the church (God's people) no movement of separation can be allowed, either from the Jews or from the Gentiles (Davies, 1984:144). Paul does not allow the Jews or the Gentiles any superiority on the grounds of race or nationality, but **in the scheme of salvation he does allow Israel a historical-ethnic particularity**, on the ground of God's election and his faithfulness to his promise to Israel.